VENOM

GRØNBEKK
EWING
OHTA
CAFU
D'ARMATA

MARVEL

INFILTRATION

VENOM

UNTIL RECENTLY, **EDDIE BROCK** WAS THE SYMBIOTE-WEARING WEB-SLINGER KNOWN AS VENOM. BUT WHEN EDDIE SEEMINGLY DIED, THE VENOM SYMBIOTE PASSED TO HIS SON, **DYLAN**. EVEN AFTER IT TURNED OUT EDDIE WAS ALIVE, DYLAN KEPT THE SYMBIOTE. NOW DYLAN IS...

VENOM

INFILTRATION

BREN WATERS IS THE CHILD OF AN ALCHEMAX SECURITY GUARD AND HOST TO THE **TOXIN** SYMBIOTE. HE AND TOXIN HAVE AGREED TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE DYLAN WHEN THE TIME COMES IN EXCHANGE FOR VENOM'S HELP IN PUTTING A STOP TO MYSTERIOUS ATTACKS ON ALCHEMAX EMPLOYEES.

BUT THE REAL CULPRIT, **NONAME**, LURES THE SYMBIOTES INTO A TRAP, WHICH THEY BARELY SURVIVE. AND NATASHA ROMANOFF, THE **BLACK WIDOW**, IS ALSO ON NONAME'S TRAIL — BUT IS SHE FRIEND OR FOE TO VENOM?!

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“STATE OF GRACE” PART 1

NATASHA ROMANOFF HAS FOLLOWED THE BLOODY TRAIL OF AN ELUSIVE, NAMELESS GROUP FOR MONTHS.
IT HAS BROUGHT HER TO THIS BASEMENT, TALKING TO A MAN SHE ONCE TRUSTED.
(IT IS ALMOST CERTAINLY A TRAP.)
HOW LONG HAVE WE KNOWN EACH OTHER, NATASHA? TEN YEARS?
YOU KNOW I VALUE YOUR OPINION...BUT IN THIS CASE...I JUST...I DON'T SEE THE PROBLEM.
KEITH WALKEN WAS ONCE HER FRIEND.
NOW HE IS NO ONE.
THE PROBLEM IS THAT THEY'LL SAY THAT THEY'RE RIGHT.
BECAUSE THEY ARE.
SHE CALLS THEM NONAME.
THEY ARE NOT QUITE TERRORISTS.
THEY HAVE NO POLITICAL AGENDA. NO SHARED VALUES. NO DESIRE TO CHANGE THE WORLD.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, WALKEN?
I'M SORRY, NAT.
I WISH YOU'D STAYED OUT OF THIS. I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS.
BOUND TOGETHER IN GRIEF, THEY PUT ON MASKS TO SEE JUSTICE DONE FOR THOSE THEY LOST.
A FAMILIAR STORY, BUT THEIR METHODS ARE LIKE NOTHING ELSE.

THE FEELING IS MUTUAL, KEITH.
AGHH.
YOU WOULD THINK THERE WOULD BE **SCREAMING.**
GLLK!
BUT THE ONLY SOUND IS THE SOFT SQUISH OF **BRAIN MATTER** YIELDING TO SYMBIOTE TEETH.

YOU CAN'T JUST KILL **AT WILL,** YOU KNOW.
IT WAS JUST A LITTLE BITE.
YOU ATE HIS BRAIN.
IT WAS A *TINY* BRAIN.
NEW THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES FLICKER THROUGH HER MIND.
THEY DO NOT BELONG TO THE SYMBIOTE.
YOU-- **STOLE** HIS MIND.
HAVE YOU FOUND A WAY INTO...WHAT DO YOU CALL IT... ***THE HIVE?***
NOT YET.
KEEP TRYING. WE NEED TO GET TO HIM BEFORE ALCHEMAX DOES.

WE NEED TO GET TO *VENOM.*
RIING-RIIING
RIING-RIIING
RIING-RIIING
Bren
FINAL NOTICE
BREN...?
DYLAN! YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF THERE! THEY'RE COMING FOR YOU!
WHAT...? I DON'T--
NONAME IS BACK... **ALCHEMAX** THINKS YOU'RE INVOLVED!
VENOM?
WHAT THE HELL...?
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER... JUST GET OUT OF THERE!
VENOM?!
THOUGH VENOM DOES NOT ANSWER, DYLAN FEELS ITS FEAR BLENDING WITH HIS OWN.

VENOM'S HIVE.
THE HIVE IS COMPROMISED.
CAN YOU HEAR THAT, TOXIN?
YES... THERE IS... SCUTTLING.
INVADED--
--IT FEELS LIKE THEY ARE EVERYWHERE.
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?
CHTCHTCHTCHTCH
CHTCHTCHTCHTCHTCHT
INTRUDERS.
INTRUDER.
HUNDREDS OF VOICES--
WHO ARE YOU?
IS YOUR HIVE NOT SECURE, VENOM?
--SPEAK AS ONE.
HTCHTCHTCHTC
HELLO THERE, PROGENITOR.

I AM WIDOW. WE NEED TO TALK.

MEANWHILE...
VENOM?! WHERE ARE YOU?!
CRRRASH
THE BULLETS SHATTER AS THEY HIT THE WALLS.
TA TA-TA TA TA TA TA-TA TA TA TA
THE STENCH OF CHEMICALS FILLS THE ROOM AS THEY BREAK.
AND DYLAN KNOWS--
TA TA TA
--THEY ARE MEANT FOR VENOM.
RELIEF FILLS DYLAN AS HE FEELS HIS OTHER RETURN.
VENOM!
TA-TA
TA

QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY ANGER.
WHERE THE HELL *WERE YOU?*
THE HIVE.
I AM SORRY, DYLAN. THERE IS TROUBLE AFOOT.
WELL, NO #$%&!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON?
NO, BUT WE ARE ABOUT TO FIND OUT.
TOXIN IS MEETING US AT WIDOW'S PLACE.
WHO THE HELL IS *WIDOW?*

NSA, NYC.
HE IS AN ACTOR--
--PLAYING THE TITLE ROLE OF **KEITH WALKEN.**
KEITH! I THOUGHT YOU WERE TAKING THE MORNING OFF?
THIS IS HIS **COSTUME.**
YOU KNOW ME, SUSAN!
I'M NOT A WORKAHOLIC-- I'M A WORK **ENTHUSIAST!**
THESE ARE HIS **LINES.**
--BUT THE FISHING UPSTATE IS GREAT. I HAVE THIS SMALL STREAM I GO TO FOR RAINBOW TROUT...
HIS PROPS.
HIS SET.
BUT HE--
--IS **NO ONE.**
WALKEN'S MEMORIES...

...THEY FEEL FOREIGN. INTRUDERS IN THE DEPTHS OF HER MIND.
ON A LIGHTER NOTE, GRACIE THE GOAT HAS BEEN FOUND, BUT YOU WILL **NEVER** GUESS WHERE.
HIS GRIEF IS OVERWHELMING--
--COATING EVERYTHING IN DESPAIR.
WORDLESSLY, THE SYMBIOTE SHOWS HER HOW TO CONTROL IT.
HOW TO DISTINGUISH ONE MIND FROM ANOTHER--
--AND HOW TO VIEW HIS MEMORIES WITHOUT GETTING LOST IN HIS GLOOM.
VENOM IS COMING.
I'LL GET THE COOKIES.

THERE ARE COOKIES?
NO.
OH.
VENOM KNOWS WHO SHE IS.
IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE THE WORLD IS FLAT, A FLORIDA MAN LAUNCHED A HOMEMADE ROCKET--
BLACK WIDOW. NATASHA ROMANOFF.
WHERE IS THE OTHER ONE...
TOXIN.
...TOXIN?
ON HIS WAY.
YOU'RE **EDDIE BROCK'S** SON...DYLAN. WHERE IS EDDIE?
--NEIGHBOR'S POOL. IN A STATEMENT TO THE MEDIA, HIS WIDOW--
...NOT HERE.
DYLAN FEELS A STING OF RAGE AS HE SPEAKS.
AS THE TRUTH OF HIS WORDS LINGERS IN THE AIR.
--DIED HONORING HIS LIFELONG QUEST FOR TRUTH IN A WORLD CORRUPTED BY SO-CALLED SCIENCE.
HIS FATHER WAS NOT THERE WHEN ALCHEMAX BROKE INTO THEIR HOME. NOT THERE WHEN THEY TRIED TO KILL DYLAN AND VENOM.
NEVER THERE WHEN DYLAN NEEDS HIM.
I'VE MET VENOM BEFORE.
I MUST ADMIT, I DIDN'T SEE THE APPEAL OF A SYMBIOTE AT THE TIME, BUT NOW...

DYLAN FEELS A STING OF **SOMETHING ELSE** WHEN HE SEES THE SYMBIOTE IN NATASHA'S CARE.
THERE IS REMARKABLE TRUST, YOU KNOW?
NOT QUITE A MIRROR, NOT QUITE ***YOURSELF,*** BUT COMPLETE TRUST, NONETHELESS.
I'VE RARELY HAD THAT WITH ANYONE. IT'S ODDLY COMFORTING.
IT IS SO YOUNG. SO CURIOUS.
YOU'RE BLEEDING.
IT'S NOTHING.
ALCHEMAX CAME TO MY HO--THE ***TOWN HOUSE.***
THEY THINK I'M THIS ***NONAME*** CHARACTER, BUT I'M NOT...
HE IS NOT CONVINCED THIS WOMAN **--THIS SPY--**IS THE RIGHT HOST FOR A NEWBORN.
I KNOW. ALCHEMAX WILL FIGURE IT OUT IN THE END. PROBABLY TOO LATE.
LISTEN, I NEED ***VENOM'S*** HELP, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE THIS...***YOUNG.***
VENOM FEELS HIS OTHER'S DISTRESS.
I UNDERSTAND YOUR WORRY, DYLAN.
BUT WE NEED THEIR HELP.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE UP FOR THIS?
WE ARE VENOM.
IF YOU NEED VENOM, YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME.
BUT I HAVEN'T AGREED TO HELP WITH ANYTHING. I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THIS IS!
LOOK.
THIS IS IT. IT BEGINS.
DEATH.
I FEAR THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

WE NEED TO GO.
WAIT, TOXIN... LOOK...
YOU CALL IT THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS.
COLLATERAL DAMAGE.
IT'S NONAME.
ONE OFTEN HEARS THAT THE VALUE OF A LIFE CANNOT BE MEASURED IN DOLLARS--
--BUT YOU HAVE PROVEN THAT TO BE WRONG.
AGAIN AND AGAIN.
WILL THIS STILL BE THE CASE WHEN THE EYES OF THE WORLD ARE UPON YOU? WHEN IT IS YOUR FAMILY ON THE LINE?
OR WILL THE MATH CHANGE?
STATE YOUR NAME, BOY.
I...I AM NO ONE.
BREN! WE NEED TO GO NOW!
YES.
THE LAST THING BREN THINKS BEFORE EVERYTHING GOES TO HELL IS--
--"THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ME."
BREN WATERS?

YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE. YOU KNOW WHAT WE WANT FROM YOU.
CLICK
IT'S ON--
CLICK
--EVERY CHANNEL.
UNLESS YOU ACT, HE WILL DIE.
THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. LIKE, *TECHNICALLY,* IT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
WHO COULD HAVE DONE THIS?
NO ONE.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
A YEAR AGO, ALCHEMAX HAD A MASSIVE FIRE AT ONE OF THEIR FACILITIES. A NUMBER OF PEOPLE DIED, AND A SUBSTANCE CALLED K-43 LEAKED INTO THE WATER SUPPLY.
IT HIT THE TOWN HARD, AND OVER THE FOLLOWING MONTHS, PEOPLE BEGAN GETTING SICK...
ALCHEMAX DENIED ANY WRONGDOING, OF COURSE.
THE FAMILIES WERE LEFT WITHOUT ANSWERS...WITHOUT SUPPORT.
THE BOY IS IN A ROOM WITH *HIGHLY CONCENTRATED* K-43. IT MIGHT TAKE A FEW HOURS, BUT IT WILL KILL HIM.
UNLESS ALCHEMAX TAKES RESPONSIBILITY AND ADMITS TO WHAT THEY HAVE DONE.

NONAME IS GOING TO LET HIM SLOWLY DIE ON LIVE TV.
OBJECTIVELY, IT IS QUITE CLEVER, IF...RUTHLESS.
EVERYONE WILL TALK ABOUT IT. ALL ATTENTION WILL BE ON THIS BOY.
SOON, THE PUBLIC WILL CRY OUT FOR THE TRUTH. THE LONGER THE WAIT, THE MORE DEVASTATING IT WILL BE.
AND IF THEY STAY QUIET, NONAME WILL DO IT AGAIN AND AGAIN.
AND WHO ARE *THEY?* NONAME?
PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST SOMEONE IN SUCH MEANINGLESS WAYS, THE ONLY WAY TO FIND ANY MEANING IS TO HOLD THOSE RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTABLE.
THEY ARE... EVERYWHERE.
THEY WORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT--
--THEY ARE YOUR NEIGHBOR, THEY...
WHAT...?
CAN YOU--?
CAN YOU... CAN YOU FEEL THAT?
THAT'S YOUR SYMBIOTE SENSE.
...*TOXIN* IS IN TROUBLE.

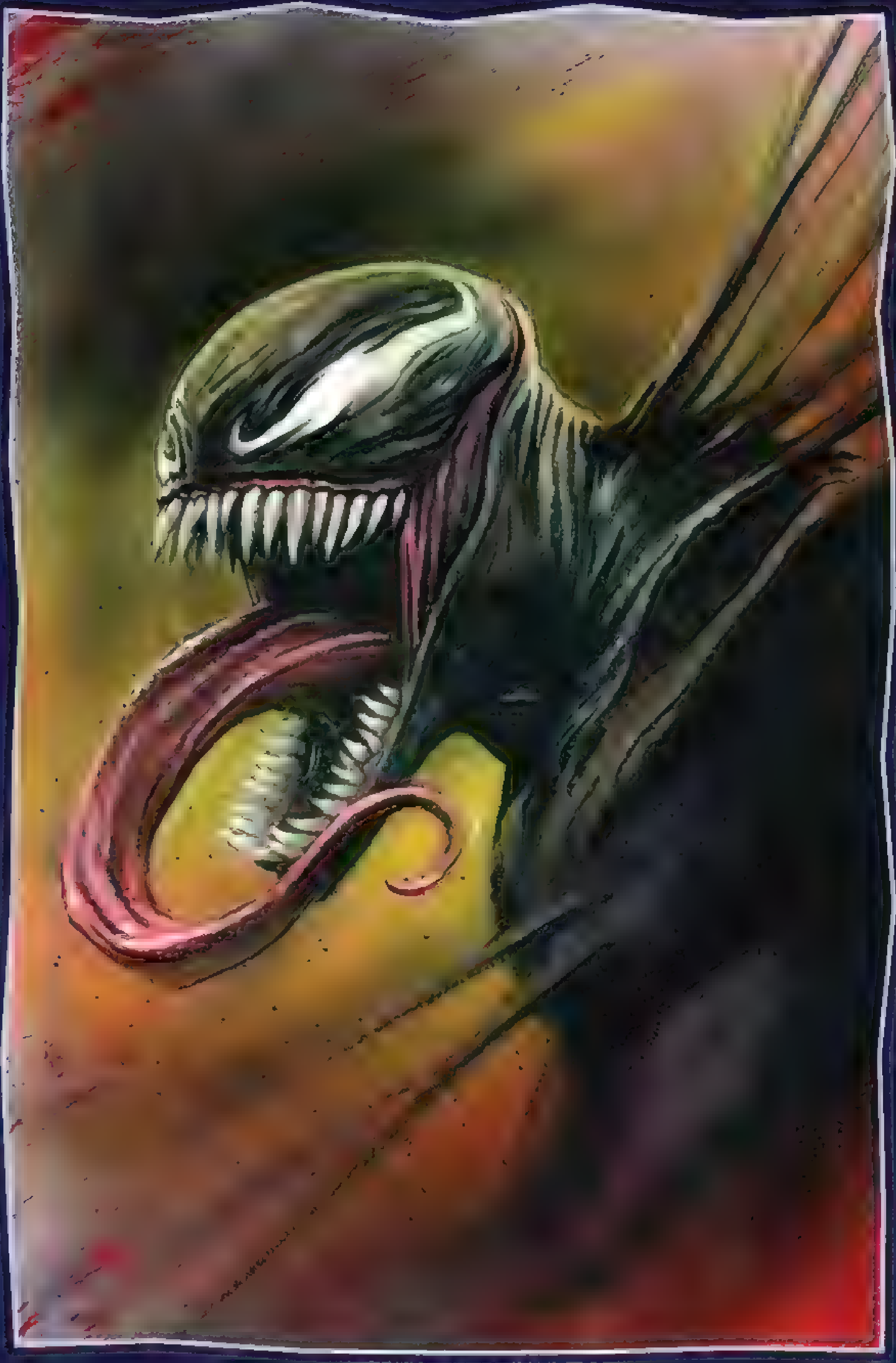
THE SCENT OF FEAR MIGHT NOT BE NOTICEABLE TO **HUMAN** SENSES--
IT'S HIM! **BREN WATERS!** PUT YOUR HANDS UP!
OUR NAME...
--BUT **TOXIN** CAN SMELL IT. HE IS **USED** TO IT--
...IS **TOXIN!**
--THE CHEMICAL SCENT USUALLY FILLS THE AIR AT THE FIRST SIGHT OF THE SYMBIOTE.
WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU THINK THAT'S GOING TO DO TO ME?
SCRATCH MY BACK?
TICKLE MY FEET?
THE SMELL OF FEAR IS MOST NOTABLE NOW--
--IN ITS **ABSENCE.**
NO. IT'S MEANT TO **DISTRACT YOU.**
WHOEVER THESE MEN ARE--

--THEY ARE NOT AFRAID.
FIRE.
BUT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOREVER--
--TOXIN IS.

THE SYMBIOTE HIVE MIND IS OVERWHELMING.
THERE IS PAIN, SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY.
I CAN FIND HIM.
YIELDING CONTROL TO HER OTHER IS A WELCOME RELIEF.
IF YOU CAN DETECT OTHER SYMBIOTES, CAN YOU LOCATE ME TOO? WHEREVER I AM?
YES, BUT *TOXIN* IS OUR GRANDCHILD, WHICH MAKES IT A BIT MORE COMPLICATED.
I CAN FEEL...MORE OF US.
YES. I AM COMMUNICATING WITH OUR HIVE. THEY ARE COMING. THEY WILL HELP.
ARE YOU WITH US, WIDOW?
YES.
THEN LET'S GO.

A BARRAGE OF SOUND AND HEAT--
--THE WEAPONS ARE MADE FOR TOXIN.
IT FEELS LIKE HE IS MELTING FROM THE INSIDE.
WHHHRRRWHHRR
AS THE SYMBIOTE DISINTEGRATES, IT WORRIES ABOUT THE HUMAN IN ITS CARE.
IT KNOWS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE BREN IS TO LEAVE.
NO! DON'T GO! DON'T LEAVE ME!
AND AS THEY ARE RIPPED APART--
BREN. I HAVE TO. IT'S THE ONLY WAY...
TOXIN!
--THE LAST THING BREN HEARS HIS OTHER WHISPER IS--

DON'T LOOK BACK.
BREN WATERS.
THAT **WAS** YOUR NAME.
HE TRIES TO REACH FOR HIS OTHER--
--BUT THERE IS NOTHING THERE BUT FEAR.
NOW YOU ARE **NO ONE.**
AND HOLLOW DARKNESS.



#26 variant by
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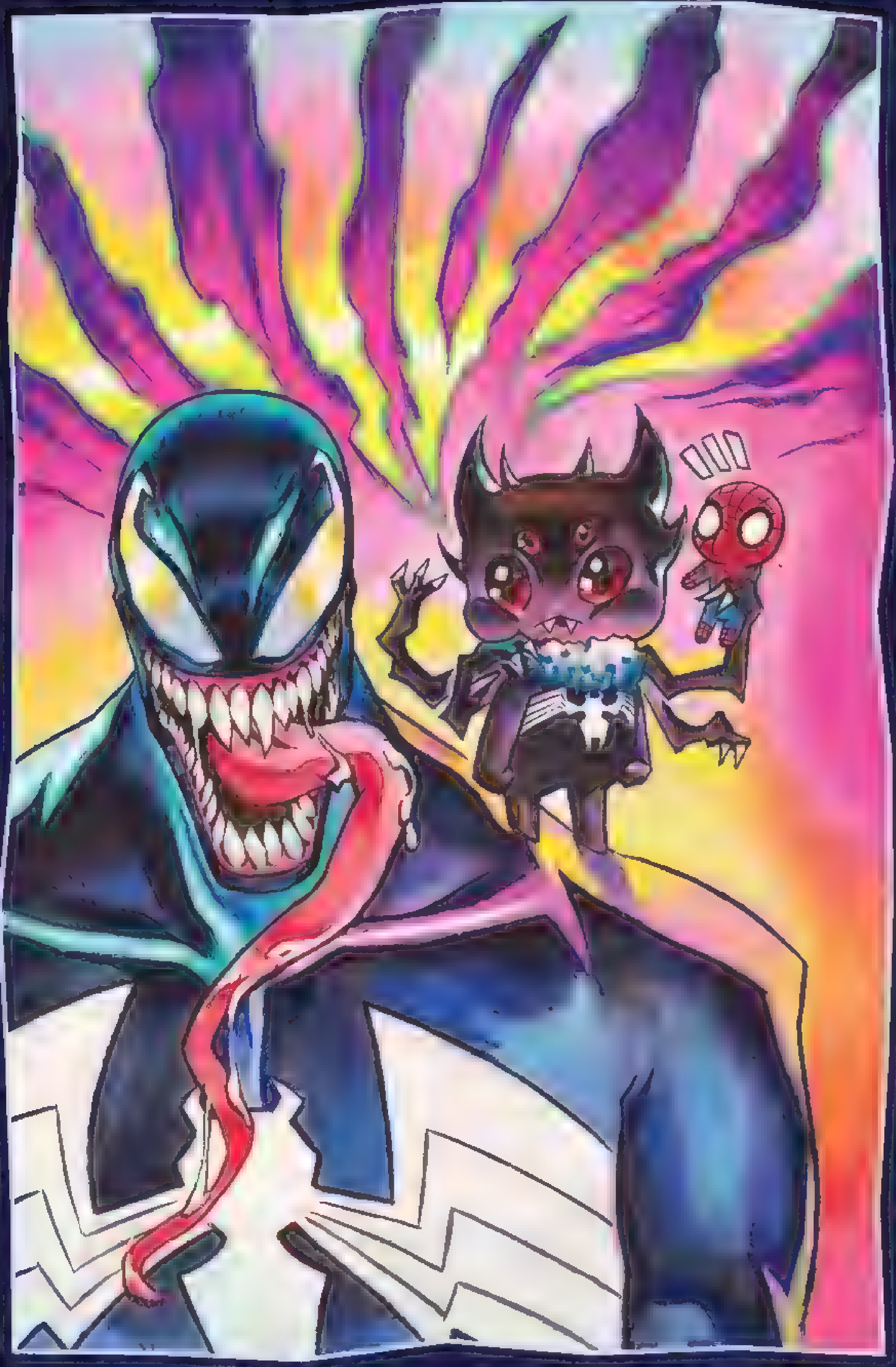

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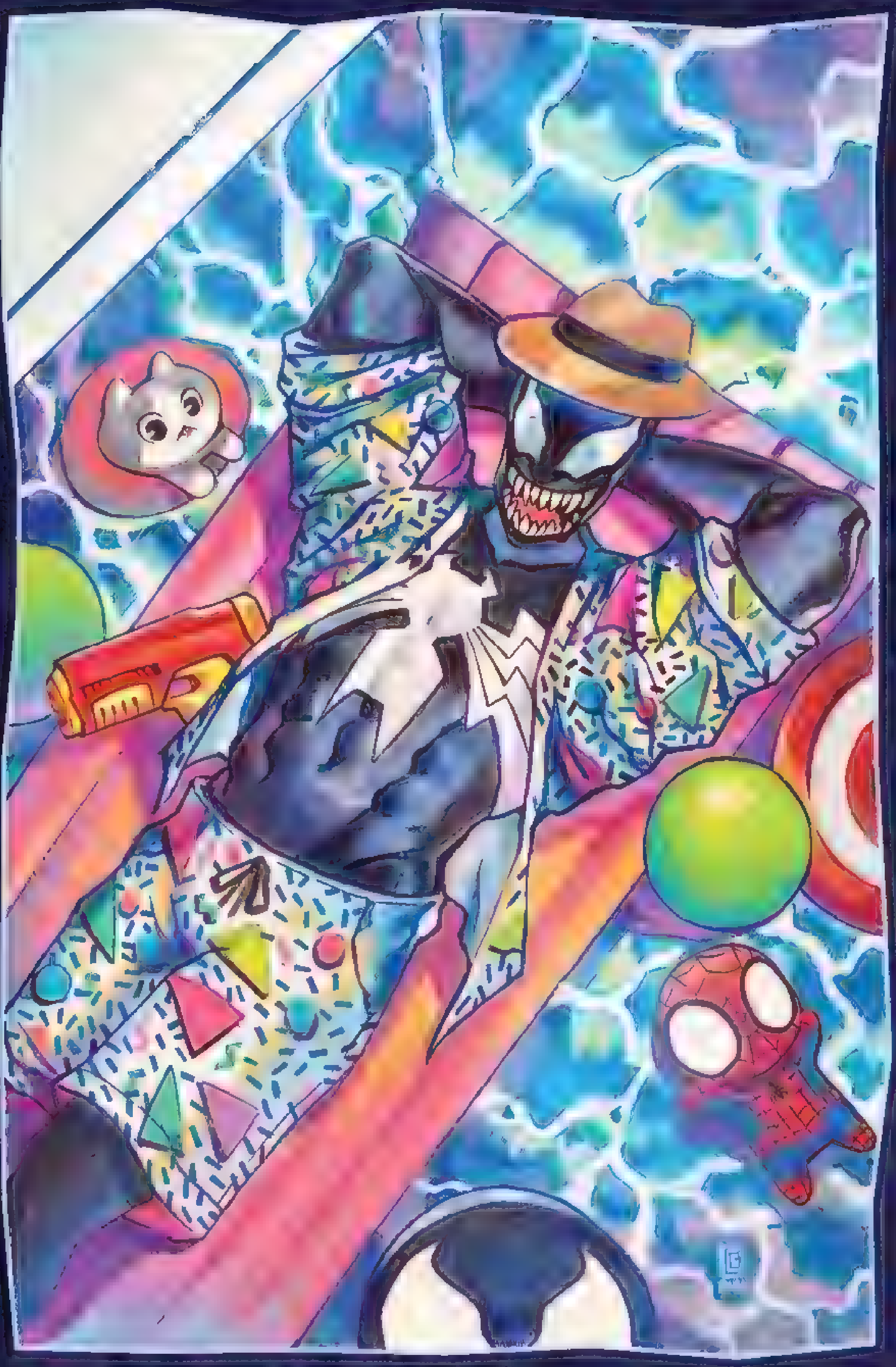

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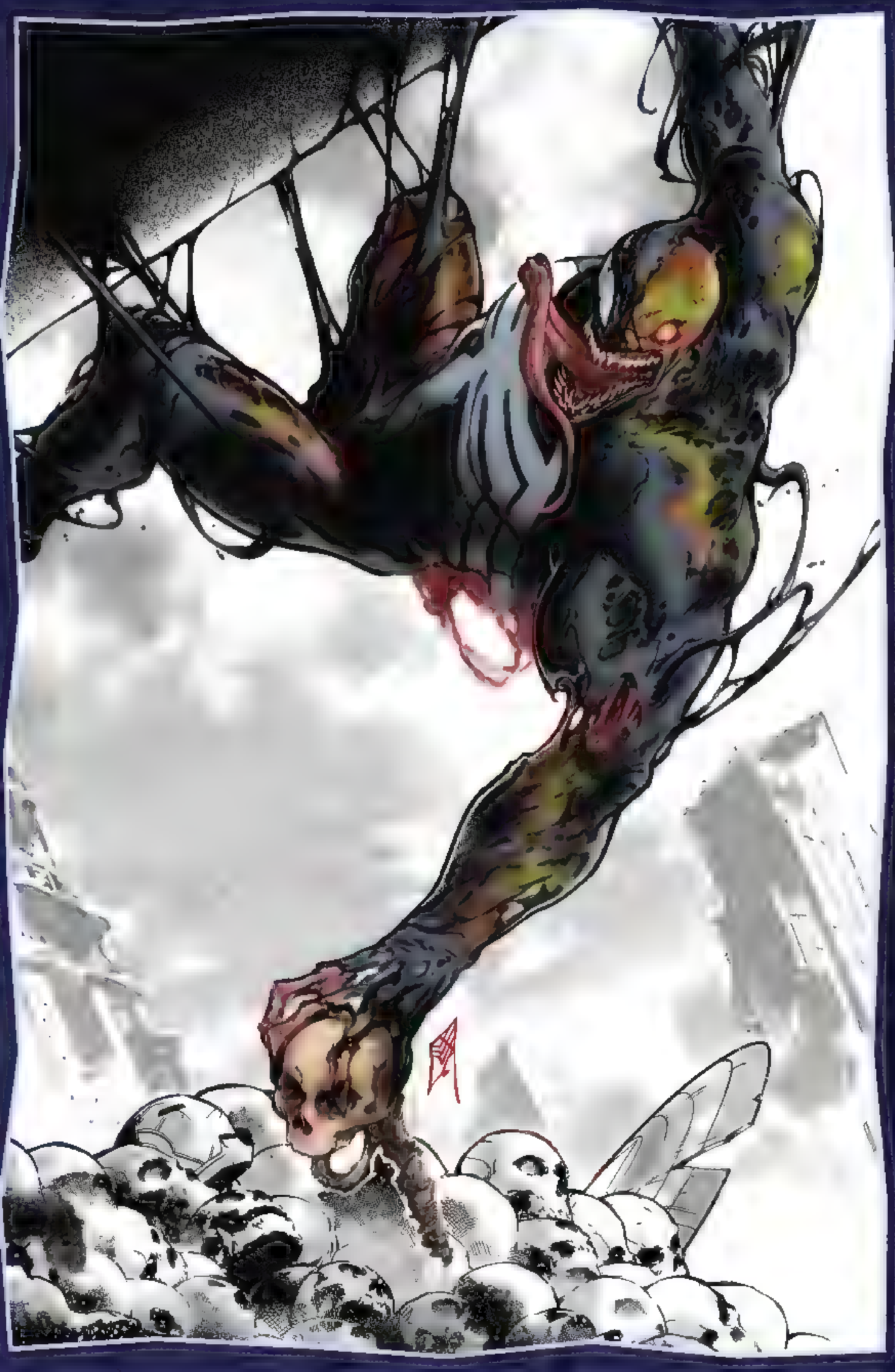


#26 Stormbreakers variant by
C.F. VILLA

“STATE OF GRACE” PART 2

BREN WATERS DOES NOT KNOW WHERE HE IS.
BUT HE KNOWS THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION CALLED NONAME BROUGHT HIM HERE TO DIE.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
...WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
DO YOU THINK SILENCE WILL SAVE YOU?
SILENCE...
"SILENCE IS A SOURCE OF GREAT STRENGTH."
DO YOU FEEL STRONG?
THERE ARE MANY WISE WORDS ABOUT THE VIRTUES OF SILENCE.
THEY ARE MOSTLY LIES.
SEPARATED FROM THE TOXIN SYMBIOTE, BREN'S LONELINESS IS SUFFOCATING.
HE FEELS HOLLOW, WEAK AND SMALL.
THERE'S A QUOTE THAT SAYS SOMETHING LIKE, "SILENT AND LISTEN ARE MADE UP OF THE SAME LETTERS... THINK ABOUT IT."
CAN YOU BELIEVE PEOPLE THINK THAT'S... PROFOUND?
(BUT THERE IS ALSO ANGER.)
SO MANY WORDS... SO LITTLE TRUTH.
WE ARE GOING TO DO MANY THINGS TO YOU. BUT, FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, WE WILL NEVER LIE.
NOW.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
"WHERE IS TOXIN?"

HERE... SOMEWHERE.
IT TAKES **WIDOW** A MOMENT TO UNDERSTAND HOW **VENOM** KNOWS.
BUT THEN SHE SMELLS IT.
BURNT FLESH AND CHEMICALS--
COME ON.
--LIKE SOMEONE IS BARBECUING MEAT STILL IN THE PLASTIC.

IT SMELLS MOLTEN.
DOWN HERE.
SULPHUREOUS.
CAN YOU FEEL THAT?
YES, CHILD.
TOXIN IS HERE SOMEWHERE...
I FEEL MORE THAN JUST TOXIN. SOMETHING, OR SOMEONE, IS HEADED THIS WAY.
YES. HELP IS COMING.
BUT WHO COULD HAVE DONE THIS?
HERE. TOXIN. OR WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM.

WHO, INDEED.
IS HE... DEAD?
NO. BUT HE'S INJURED. BADLY.
WHERE IS THE BOY? BREN?
THAT IS THE QUESTION.
NOT HERE.
BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE TRAGEDY BEFORE THEM, VENOM SENSES SOMETHING ELSE.
TOXIN NEEDS A NEW HOST. NOW.
YOU GO GET HIM ONE. I NEED ANSWERS.
TOXIN! WHAT HAPPENED?
HHHI-I-IVE...
SOME CONTOUR OF DANGER THAT MAKES IT THINK--
--THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

VENOM'S HIVE.
WHAT... HAPPENED?
NONAME WAS PREPARED. KNEW WE WERE COMING.
THEY HAD... SOME WEAPON. IT FELT LIKE THEY WERE BURNING US FROM WITHIN.
EVER SEEN SOMETHING EXPLODE IN THE MICROWAVE?
I FELT LIKE THAT.
LIKE WE WERE MEAT LOAF LEFT TOO LONG IN THE HEAT.
WHATEVER THEY WERE DOING TO ME WAS KILLING BREN.
I HAD TO... LEAVE HIM.
HE'S ALL ALONE.
WE WILL FIND HIM.
I WILL FIND HIM. YOU... FIND BREN'S FATHER. OZKAR. FIND OUT WHAT ALCHEMAX IS HIDING FROM THE WORLD.
WHOEVER DID THIS TO US... THEY'LL KILL BREN.
I'M GOING TO--
--SLAUGHTER THEM.
CAN YOU TRACK BREN?
MAYBE. I DON'T KNOW. I'M SO WEAK. I NEED... I NEED--
WE'RE WORKING ON IT.
BEFORE BREN'S CAPTOR WAS NO ONE...

...HE WAS JACK.
NOW, HE WOULD SAY THAT JACK HAD BEEN A MAN OF SIMPLE PLEASURES.
STAY BACK, PLEASE. THERE HAS BEEN A...TOXIC LEAK, AND WE NEED TO CLEAR IT BEFORE YOU CAN USE THE ROAD.
HARDWORKING AND DECENT. JACK DID HIS FATHER PROUD. WOULD HAVE DONE HIS MOTHER PROUD TOO, HAD SHE BEEN ALIVE.
WE'RE VERY SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE!
IF JACK HAD ANY COMPLAINTS (HE RARELY DID), IT WAS THAT HIS LIFE SOMETIMES SEEMED SMALL.
BUT HE HAD HIS JOB, HIS FRIENDS, THE LOCAL WATERING HOLE.
HOW LONG ARE WE STAYING?
BEATS ME. I THINK THEY MEAN TO CLEAN UP...THE REMAINS.
AND THERE WERE WOMEN.
BUT THEN THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED.
HOLY HELL, IT STINKS.
YEAH, IT'S PRETTY--
KA-KLANG
THE "ACCIDENT."
I'LL CHECK IT OUT.
HIS FATHER BURNED TO DEATH IN HIS ARMS.
THE FIRE CLAIMED HIS FATHER. THE CHEMICALS DESTROYED HIS TOWN. ALLEN CHEMICAL DENIED ANY WRONGDOING.

HE LOST HIS WILL TO LIVE THAT DAY. HE SPENT THE NEXT MONTHS NUMB.
THEN **NONAME** FOUND HIM.
ANYONE HERE? PLEASE COME FORWARD AND WE'LL GET YOU TO SAFETY.
THEY TOLD HIM HE WAS NOT **JACK.** HE NEVER WAS, NOT IN THE EYES OF THOSE WHO HURT HIM.
HE WAS A NUMBER. A MATH PROBLEM. AN INSURANCE COMPLAINT.
I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU.
HE WAS NO ONE TO THEM. NO ONE.
AND BEING JACK WAS SO PAINFUL.
MEOW?
AND ALL THE THINGS THAT MADE JACK WHO HE WAS--
YOU HAD ME WORRIED THERE FOR A MOMENT, BUDDY.
IT'S JUST A CAT!
YOU SURE?
--THEY NO LONGER MADE HIM HAPPY.
LOOK AGAIN!
AND THEN **NONAME** SHOWED UP AND SAID THAT HE DIDN'T HAVE TO BE JACK ANYMORE.

HE COULD BE WHAT HE ALWAYS HAD BEEN.
KA-DNK
NO ONE.
HRKKK.
I HAD IT UNDER CONTROL.
WELL, I BEAT YOU TO IT, KITTEN.
YOU MUST BE SLEEPER.
VENOM SAID YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY.
JUST DON'T HURT HIM. HE'S NO USE TO TOXIN DEAD.

BREN WATERS KNOWS THEY CANNOT KILL HIM.
IT HAS BEEN AN HOUR, AND WE CANNOT CONFIRM IF WHAT WE ARE SEEING IS REAL OR SOME DISTASTEFUL PRANK.
(YET.)
HE KNOWS HIS VALUE LIES IN DYING PUBLICLY.
SO FAR, NO ORGANIZATION HAS TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DREADFUL IMAGES...
AND HE FEELS ALMOST TOUCHED THAT THEY SPEND SO MUCH TIME MAKING HIM UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE TRYING TO DO.
SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF HIS MIND, HE KNOWS THIS IS THE MANIPULATION TALKING.
ARE YOU WATCHING?
I THINK WE'VE PASSED THE STAGE WHERE THERE IS ANY HOPE TO SAVE HIS LIFE.
SHAME, REALLY.
WE THOUGHT... THERE WOULD BE SOME POETIC JUSTICE IN USING THE SAME SUBSTANCE THAT KILLED OUR FAMILIES TO KILL HIM.
BUT IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE GRAPHIC ENOUGH FOR THE WORLD.
PEOPLE SEEM MOSTLY ANNOYED THAT WE'RE DISRUPTING THEIR REGULAR TV SHOWS.
DID YOU KILL TOXIN?
GEEZ, KID, YOU NAMED IT?
HE IS MY OTHER.

LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN.
THEY'RE STILL UP THERE, BURNING *SYMBIOTE* OFF THE GROUND.
ARE WE JUST GOING TO LET THEM GET AWAY WITH IT?!
THEY HAVE BREN, SLEEPER.
WELL... #$%&.
NNNGH...?
NYAAARGH!
THE MAN WHO WAS ONCE **JACK** DOES NOT FIGHT.
AAGHHH...
ENEMIES MERE MOMENTS BEFORE, THE HUMAN AND SYMBIOTE BOND.
THE GRIEF IN ONE BLENDS WITH THE FURY OF THE OTHER.

BUT TOXIN DOESN'T HAVE ROOM FOR ANYONE BUT BREN.
WHERE IS HE? WHERE DID THEY TAKE HIM?
HE SEARCHES JACK'S MIND FOR THE ANSWERS, BUT HIS NEW HOST DOES NOT HAVE THEM.
CAN'T YOU TRACK BREN?
TAKE A MOMENT, BUDDY.
NOT YET...I'M SO WEAK.
SLEEPER, STAY WITH TOXIN.
WIDOW, WE NEED TO FIND OZKAR.
THAT'S... OZKAR WATERS? BREN'S FATHER. WORKS FOR ALCHEMAX, RIGHT?
WHERE DO WE FIND HIM?
MM-HMH.

"HE'LL COME TO US."
YOU'RE SURE THIS IS GOING TO WORK?
IT WILL WORK.
ALCHEMAX IS BOUND TO BE MONITORING THE SECURITY CAMERAS.
WHEN THEY ATTACKED ME BACK IN THE TOWN HOUSE, THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THE BULLETS--
--LIKE, THEY WEREN'T NORMAL BULLETS.
THEN LET'S NOT GET SHOT.
GOOD PLAN.
IN FACT, I LOVE THIS PLAN. BE BAIT. TRY NOT TO GET SHOT. FLAWLESS.
GET READY...I THINK WE HAVE...
...INCOMING. GET INTO POSITION.
ROGER.
OR WHATEVER I'M SUPPOSED TO SAY.

THERE THEY ARE. TOLD YOU IT WOULD WORK.
OZKAR IS IN THE LAST CAR.
VENOM! GET DOWN FROM THERE!
ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE IT?
I GOT IT.
CAREFUL, CHILD!
YOU HAVE NOT TESTED YOUR STRENGTH YET.
I SAID--

CRAASHHHHHH
--I GOT IT!
AIIIEEEE!
WHAT THE HELL?!
THE BULLETS PIERCE VENOM'S SKIN.
THE PAIN IS LIKE NOTHING ELSE.
ARRGHHH!
IT MOVES THROUGH THE BODY, HOT AND EXCRUCIATING.
VENOM! VEENOM!
THEN COMES THE FEAR.
DAMMIT.
DYLAN! TO ME!
FOLLOWED BY DARKNESS.

WE ARE DOING THIS FOR *YOU.*
TO MAKE IT EASIER--
THE WORLD WATCHED IN HORROR AS 12-YEAR-OLD TRENT JOHNSON TOOK HIS LAST BREATH LIVE ON NATIONAL TELEVISION.
--TO DIE. IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES.
WE HAVE ALL BEEN WHERE YOU ARE, BUT WE WERE ALONE.
THE GROUP BEHIND THIS ACT OF **TERROR**--
--AND MAKE NO MISTAKE, THIS **IS** AN ACT OF TERRORISM--HAVE PROMISED TO RELEASE THE BODY TO HIS FAMILY WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS.
WE LEARNED THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF OUR OWN EXISTENCE ***THE HARD WAY--***
--WE LEARNED IT THROUGH ***OTHERS.***
IN THE SAME MESSAGE, THEY PLEDGED THAT THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.
THE TERRORISTS' DEMANDS REMAIN UNCLEAR.
THEY ARE STILL ASKING FOR THE RELEASE OF A CERTAIN DOCUMENT. WE CANNOT VERIFY IF THIS DOCUMENT EXISTS, WHAT IT CONTAINS OR WHO IS IN POSSESSION OF IT.
WE ARE HERE WITH YOU.
AND, JUST LIKE YOU, WE ARE NO ONE.
NOOO! LET ME GO!
BUT THE SITUATION BEGS THE QUESTION--
--WHAT TRUTH IS SO DESTRUCTIVE THAT ONE WOULD CHOOSE THE SLOW, PUBLIC DEATH OF A CHILD OVER ITS PUBLICATION?

VENOM?
VENOM!
PLEASE WAKE UP.
PLEASE.
DON'T LEAVE ME.
I WOULD NEVER--
I AM HERE.
OZKAR... OZKAR.
I NEED YOU TO CALM DOWN.
I AM... HERE.
IT... BURNS.
WHY ARE YOU NOT HEALING?
I AM, DYLAN. BUT SLOWLY.
BREN IS GOING TO DIE, OZKAR.
I NEED YOU TO FOCUS. DO YOU HAVE THE FILE?
WHERE IS HE? WHERE IS MY BOY?!
YOU! VENOM! WHERE IS BREN?!
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO FIND OUT, OZKAR.

HE'S BEHIND ALL THIS--
HRRRKKKK!
I KNOW YOU BELIEVE THAT TO BE TRUE, BUT I NEED YOU TO LISTEN TO ME.
HRK-HHRR!
HEY! THAT'S BREN'S DAD! DON'T HURT HIM!

FINE.
HHHRK...
YOU'RE WRONG, OZKAR. **NONAME** HAS BREN.
THEY'RE GOING TO DROWN HIM.
THEY'RE GOING TO DROWN HIM IN WATER CONTAMINATED BY THE SAME CHEMICAL ALCHEMAX LEAKED DURING THE ACCIDENT.
IT'S A DEATH SENTENCE.
NO! NO, NO, NO...DEAR LORD, NO.
HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS?
IT DOESN'T MATTER. THE IMPORTANT THING IS WHAT I *DON'T* KNOW--
--WHERE THEY'RE KEEPING HIM.
I NEED YOU TO HELP US FIND HIM, OZKAR.
I NEED THE FILE.
I... DON'T...
I DON'T HAVE IT. IT'S HIGHLY CLASSIFIED WITHIN ALCHEMAX...
...BUT IF IT CAN SAVE BREN, I'LL HELP YOU GET TO IT.
CLK

HE FEELS SO WEAK.
IT WILL TAKE 37 HOURS TO FILL THE POOL.
BUT DON'T WORRY. IT'LL BE OVER LONG BEFORE THEN.
AAAH!
WEAK AND ALONE.
THIS IS THE WATER OUR FAMILIES DRANK.
BATHED IN.
PLAYED IN.
THIS IS THE WATER THAT HOLLOWED THEM OUT.
ROTTED THEIR INNARDS.
ROBBED OF EVERYTHING HE IS, HE NO LONGER FEELS LIKE BREN.
HE FEELS LIKE A SYMBOL--
--LIKE A SACRIFICE--
BUT UNLIKE US, YOUR FAMILIES GET A CHANCE TO SAVE THEIR LOVED ONES.
AGGHHHH!
REMOVE THEIR GAGS.
BEGIN THE LIVE FEED. WE'RE READY.
--LIKE NO ONE.

“STATE OF GRACE” PART 3

OZKAR WATERS NO LONGER KNOWS WHO TO TRUST.
BANG
ALL HIS RIGHTEOUS FURY SEEMS TO SLIP AWAY--
--REPLACED BY DOUBT--
INCOMING!
--FEAR--
ARRGHH!
THEY'RE AIMING FOR OZKAR!
WIDOW! KEEP DOWN! KEEP HIM SAFE!
--AND GUILT.

BANG BANG
WELL, HELLO THERE!
SHRAKOOM

DON'T! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
SHLLK
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
IT'S TRAXIT. KNOCKS YOU OUT FOR A SOLID EIGHT HOURS. BUT THAT'S THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS.
I KNOW HER. SHE IS A MERCENARY...SHE WORKS FOR THE GOVERNMENT, NOT FOR NONAME.
THIS MAKES NO SENSE.
WHO CARES?! WE NEED TO FIND BREN! WE NEED TO FIND MY SON--
WE WILL. I WILL.
BUT YOU KNOW SOMETHING, OR THEY WOULDN'T BE TRYING TO KILL YOU.
YOU NEED TO START TALKING, OZKAR.

MEANWHILE...
HIDDEN WITHIN THE ENEMY, TOXIN REGAINS ITS STRENGTH.
THE SYMBIOTE KEEPS A TIGHT HOLD ON ITS NEW HOST, AS THEY HEAD BACK TO NONAME'S BASE.
THAT WAS BLOODY INTENSE.
BACK TO BREN.
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD WORK--
--THEN THE SYMBIOTE BASTARD JUST... MELTED IN FRONT OF OUR EYES.
NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!
YOU ALL RIGHT THERE, BUDDY?
...
YEAH... JUST... CAR-SICK.
SIT TIGHT. WE'RE ALMOST THERE.
HEY-- WHY ARE WE STOPPING?
"YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT AT AN ALCHEMAX PLANT."

A CHEMICAL SPILLED INTO THE WATERWAYS OF THE LOCAL TOWN AND CAUSED...WELL, IT WASN'T GREAT.
BUT WHAT MOST PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW IS THAT THE PROJECT WAS FUNDED BY THE **GOVERNMENT** THROUGH THE **LIFE FOUNDATION.**
THEY WORKED UNDER THE THEORY THAT THE CHEMICAL MADE YOU AN **UNDESIRABLE** SYMBIOTE HOST.
THE RUMOR WITHIN ALCHEMAX IS THAT WHEN THE LEAK HAPPENED, **CARLTON DRAKE** PERSONALLY ALLOWED IT TO **PLAY OUT.**
SO THEY DECIDED TO DO AN EXPERIMENT ON THE **LOCALS?** TEST THIS THEORY ON FOUR THOUSAND NONCONSENTING CHILDREN AND ADULTS?
I THINK THEY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE LIKE ADDING FLUORIDE TO THE WATER. I DON'T THINK THEY KNEW IT WOULD CAUSE HARM.
IT DID THOUGH. **DOZENS** DIED.
SO, THIS FILE NONAME WANTS WOULD EXPOSE THAT THE GOVERNMENT ALLOWED OR CAUSED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TO BE EXPOSED TO A TOXIC CHEMICAL?
I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE WHAT'S IN THE FILE, BUT IT IS POSSIBLE...
BUT WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WHO CARES ABOUT THIS NOW? THEY HAVE MY SON!
IT MATTERS...

"...BECAUSE SOMEONE IS *CLEANING UP* THEIR *MESS.*"
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY ARE WE STOPPING HERE?
WELL, YOU'VE REACHED THE END OF THE ROAD, MATE.
RATATATATATATATA
AND THE ONLY WAY TO CLEAN THIS SPECIFIC MESS IS TO KILL EVERYONE INVOLVED.
THAT MEANS *YOU*--
--YOUR COLLEAGUES--

"--AND IT MEANS BREN."
THEY'RE HERE!
GO, GO, GO!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
BREN WATERS WONDERS IF HIS FATHER IS WATCHING THE LIVE FEED.
HE PUTS ON A BRAVE FACE, JUST IN CASE, BUT DEEP INSIDE--
SOMETHING IS GOING ON.
LOOK AT THEM!
MAYBE SOMEONE IS COMING TO RESCUE US!
--HIS STOMACH TWISTS IN PAIN.
DO YOU HEAR THAT? THAT'S A HELICOPTER!
OH, THANK THE LORD...THANK YOU, LORD!
HE DOES NOT KNOW IF REMNANTS OF HIS CONNECTION TO TOXIN ARE STILL INTACT--
--BUT SOMEHOW BREN KNOWS--
THEY'RE DEMANDING THE HOSTAGES.
THEN LET'S GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT.
TOXIN... WHERE ARE YOU?
--THE SITUATION JUST GOT WORSE.

TOXIN'S VOICE REACHES OUT THROUGH THE HIVE.
VENOM? WE HAVE BREN'S LOCATION. BUT WE HAVE A--
--A SITUATION.
THERE IS A THIRD PARTY ON THE SCENE.
THEY JUST CUT THE POWER. I THINK THEY'RE GOING IN.
STAY PUT, TOXIN. WE'RE ON OUR WAY. SLEEPER WILL BE THERE IN A MOMENT.
THE LIVE FEED WENT DOWN.
NONAME'S FEED? THE ONE SHOWING BREN?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
WE'LL GET BREN. YOU AND OZKAR GET THE FILE. RELEASE IT IF YOU MUST.
RIGHT.
WHAT? YOU CAN'T TRUST HIM!
I SAW YOU, VENOM!
WHEN OUR COLLEAGUE--MY FRIEND--WAS BLEEDING TO DEATH, YOU WERE THERE!
I SAW YOU ON THE LIVE FEED! I KNOW YOU'RE WORKING WITH NONAME!
I WAS THERE TO SAVE HIM, OZKAR.
TRUST ME OR NOT, IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE. WE WILL STILL SAVE YOUR SON.

SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF TOXIN'S MIND--
--TOXIN'S HOST WONDERS WHY HE IS NOT DEAD.
WHAT IS THIS?
IT HURTS LIKE DEATH.
BUT THEN TOXIN TAKES OVER AND THE HUMAN IS BUT A PASSENGER ONCE MORE.
WHO THE HELL ARE THESE GUYS?
I DON'T KNOW, SLEEPER. BUT AN ENEMY OF MY ENEMY IS MY FRIEND.
SOME BLOODY FRIEND. I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE NEGOTIATING. THEY'RE BRINGING OUT THE HOSTAGES...
IS BREN WITH THEM?
NO...
HELP! HERE!
OH, THANK THE LORD! OH, THANK YOU!
MUST BE SOME KIND OF--

--RESCUE MISSION.
LIKE A STARTING PISTOL--
--THE SHOTS ECHO IN THE CONCRETE.
BREEEEEN!
VENOM, I'VE FOUND TOXIN. BUT YOU BETTER GET HERE FAST.

THEY HEAR THE WARNING WITH THEIR SYMBIOTE EARS.
SYMBIOTES! SWITCH AMMUNITION!
GOT THEM.
WATCH OUT!
ARARAGHHHH!
MORE MERCS?
AIIEEEEEEE!

OH, BLOODY HELL!
YES! THAT'S EXACTLY WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
VENOM!
SOMETHING IS OFF.
VENOM!
WIDOW'S VOICE SOUNDS THROUGH THE HIVE.
THE FEED IS BACK ON.
WHOEVER THESE GUYS ARE, THEY'RE KILLING HOSTAGES. THEY'RE KILLING EVERYONE--
--AND NONAME IS BROADCASTING THE FIGHT.
I THINK THEY WERE EXPECTING THIS.
GET BREN AND GET OUT OF THERE!
WORKING ON IT, WIDOW!
WHERE IS HE?
HE'S IN THERE, WITH THEM.
OF COURSE HE IS.

YOU SENT THEM OUT THERE TO DIE!
I'M SORRY.
IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO SHOW THE WORLD WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST.
YOU KNEW?
WE HAVE... OR WE **HAD** A MAN ON THE INSIDE...IN ONE OF THOSE THREE-LETTER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.
WE KNEW THEY'D SEND THEIR CLEANUP CREW IF WE WENT AFTER ALCHEMAX AGAIN.
HE WAS MY FATHER-IN-LAW ONCE...WHEN HE WAS STILL ***SOMEONE.***
WHEN HE WAS THE FATHER OF MY WIFE AND THE GRANDFATHER OF OUR DAUGHTER.
HE TOLD ME THE AGENCY WAS HOPING WE'D DO IT. HOPING WE'D SHOW OURSELVES...SO THEY COULD DO THIS AND END US, ONCE AND FOR ALL.
THEY KNEW WE WOULDN'T STOP. KNEW WE'D NEVER FORGET.
WH-WHO DID YOU LOSE?
GRACE. MY GIRL.
SHE LOVED TO SWIM.
SHE WAS GREAT AT IT TOO. I'M NOT JUST SAYING THAT BECAUSE I WAS HER DAD.

"KEITH, HER GRANDFATHER, BOUGHT HER A POOL. ONE OF THOSE BIG, OVERGROUND ONES.
"IT WAS THE BEST DAY OF HER SHORT LIFE.
"HE WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND HER...LIFELESS IN THE WATER."
HE BLAMED HIMSELF. IT ALMOST KILLED HIM. THEN HE BECAME NO ONE.
"WE ARE READY TO DIE FOR OUR CAUSE.
"AND THEY COME HERE TO KILL US FOR MONEY.
"SUCH IS HUMANITY."

THE ENEMY CLOSES IN ON BREN--
STOP THEM!
--AND THE SYMBIOTES FOLLOW.
I'M GOING IN!
WE'LL COVER YOU!
VENOM. OZKAR FOUND THE FILE.

WE ARE PUBLISHING IT.
THERE... THERE...IT'S UPLOADED.
THEY'LL RELEASE BREN NOW...RIGHT?
ALCHEMAX... THEY'VE...THEY'VE DONE IT... THEY'VE--
I'LL GET YOU OUT, BREN.
I'LL GET YOU...
BUT LISTEN...THE CHEMICAL...
...THIS IS NASTY STUFF.
AARGHHH!
I DON'T THINK IT COMES FROM EARTH...
WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT TOUCH THAT WATER...

TOXIN IS NOT LISTENING.
OH NO, YOU--
HE CAN SMELL BREN'S DYING BREATH IN THE AIR.
--DON'T!
HE CAN HEAR HIS LAST HEARTBEATS.
THE WATER BURNS--

--IT SEEMS TO SEEP THROUGH ITS VERY BEING.
THE SYMBIOTE TRIES TO GIVE THE BOY ITS STRENGTH.
BUT IT DOES NOT HAVE ANY.
THE BOND IS PAINFUL--
--SO PAINFUL--
--BUT BREN LIVES.
ARRGHH!

WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S TOXIN! WE BONDED, BUT...HE IS **SILENT.**
I THINK IT'S ME! I THINK I'M...BAD FOR HIM. LIKE I'M SICK OR SOMETHING.
HEAL THE BODY, HEAL THE HOST.
ANTI-VENOM.
WE NEED FLASH THOMPSON.
THEY LEAVE THE BATTLE BEHIND.
WITH THE TRUTH OUT THERE, THE WAR IS WON.
(AND NO ONE DIES HAPPILY.)

FLASH THOMPSON'S APARTMENT. A FEW HOURS LATER.
ANTI-VENOM'S ANTIBODIES RUN THROUGH BREN'S BODY--
BREN IS RESTING... THEY'RE EXHAUSTED, BUT THEY'LL BE ALL RIGHT. BOTH SYMBIOTE AND HUMAN.
--CURING AND PURIFYING UNTIL HE IS HEALED ONCE MORE.
CARNAGE... IS HE BACK?
I THINK SO. I DON'T HAVE SOLID PROOF YET, BUT...YEAH. CLETUS KASADY IS BACK.
FLASH THOMPSON WANTS TO TELL THEM THEY ARE TOO YOUNG FOR THIS.
YOU SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP.
IN A MINUTE...
DYLAN...
TOO YOUNG TO FIGHT.
BUT HE KNOWS THE FEELING TOO WELL... HE KNOWS THE QUESTION THAT HAUNTS THEM.
...YOUR DAD...
--ALCHEMAX HAS YET TO COMMENT ON THE CONTENTS OF THE MATERIAL THEY THEMSELVES RELEASED EARLIER TONIGHT.
"IF I DON'T FIGHT, WHO WILL?"
IT APPEARS TO CONFIRM WHAT MANY HAVE CONSIDERED A WILD CONSPIRACY THEORY--
...WHERE IS HE?
"WHERE THE HELL IS EDDIE BROCK?"

"PALINDROME"

LOOK AT THOSE CAVEMEN GO...
WHO. AM I?
I WAS VENOM, ONCE. I'M THE KING IN BLACK.
I'M EDDIE BROCK. THE ONE ON THE LEFT.
I USED TO BE THE EDDIE BROCK ON THE RIGHT, WILDE...BUT I WANT TO BE THE EDDIE BROCK IN THE MIDDLE--MERIDIUS. I'M STUDYING HIM. LEARNING FROM HIM. TRYING TO BECOME HIM.
THAT'S WHY THEY CALL ME TYRO.

I JUST WATCHED A FIGHT BETWEEN MYSELF, MYSELF AND MYSELF. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS IN THE GARDEN OF TIME--THERE ARE SIX EDDIE BROCKS HERE, AND WE DON'T LIKE EACH OTHER.
BUT AS I WATCHED, A MEMORY CAME BACK TO ME--ONE THAT WAS STOLEN LONG AGO BEFORE EVEN WILDE...BACK WHEN I BECAME BEDLAM.
MERIDIUS... BEFORE YOU, UH, LEAVE...THERE'S SOMETHING I MEANT TO SAY TO YOU.
SOMETHING I FORGOT...
A MEMORY OF A DEMON'S LAUGH.
TIME IS WARPED IN LIMBO!
AND IT CAN TAKE MORE THAN ONE TRACK...
THERE ARE SIX OF US IN THE GARDEN. BUT WHAT IF?
WHAT IF THERE'S A SEVENTH EDDIE?
I HAVE TO WARN MERIDIUS-- BEFORE--
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I FORGOT, TYRO? HOW PATHETIC YOU ARE.
STOP CRAWLING AFTER ME AND DO AS YOU'RE TOLD, YOU RIDICULOUS CHILD.
I HAVE PLACES TO BE.
WOW.
NICE GUY.
YEAH.

WELL...NOBODY CAN SAY I DIDN'T TRY.
NOBODY CAN SAY I HAVEN'T TRIED--FOR SO, SO LONG--TO LEARN THE SECRETS MERIDIUS KNOWS.
BUT I'M NO NEARER TO IT THAN WHEN I WAS WILDE. EVEN WHEN I WAS BLUE WITH NO EYES, I COULD SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE--AT LEAST ENOUGH TO JOKE ABOUT IT.
IS THAT MY FAULT THOUGH? THE PROBLEM ISN'T THAT I CAN'T LEARN--IT'S THAT MERIDIUS WON'T TEACH.
HE'S TOO CLOSE TO IT. TOO CLOSE TO ME--AND I'VE ALWAYS BEEN MY OWN WORST ENEMY.
NO. I CAN'T WAIT AND HOPE FOR SOME FUTURE ME TO PASS ON WHAT I NEED OUT OF KINDNESS OR PITY. NOBODY ELSE IS GOING TO TEACH ME HOW TO CONTROL MY DESTINY.
I HAVE TO FIND THE KNOWLEDGE FOR MYSELF.
I HAVE TO THROW MYSELF IN AT THE DEEP END.

DID MERIDIUS DO THIS, WHEN HE WAS ME? IS THIS THE PATH HE TOOK? IT MUST BE... AND YET...
I'M AT THE HEART OF THE GARDEN--THE SYMBIOTE HIVE--AND IT'S A SEA OF DEATH. I'M SEEING VISIONS OF THE DEAD SYMBIOTE MINDS ALL AROUND ME... ASTRAL SKELETONS, CONSUMED HUSKS...
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING STILL ALIVE HERE.
SOMETHING FAMILIAR.
THE SEVENTH EDDIE.
IT CALLS ITSELF THE EVENTUALITY--AND SOMEHOW, IT TOO IS EDDIE BROCK... BUT IN A SHAPE I'VE NEVER SEEN.
"NOT ON THIS TRACK YOU HAVEN'T," IT SAYS--AND LAUGHS.
AND IN THAT MOMENT, I FEEL A CROWD AROUND ME--A CROWD OF OTHER SELVES, OF POSSIBILITIES.
ALL THE APPROACHES I COULD HAVE TAKEN TO THIS MOMENT OF ENLIGHTENMENT...
...ALL THE ROADS THAT LEAD HERE.
BECAUSE EVERY ROAD LEADS HERE, THE EVENTUALITY TELLS ME. EVERY PATH THE KING IN BLACK CAN TAKE LEADS TO THIS.
ETERNAL SERVITUDE, MAINTAINING ETERNITY ITSELF--IN ETERNAL DARKNESS.

NO!
I DON'T WANT IT.
WHEN I PANIC, IT'S ALL TOO EASY TO UNMOOR MYSELF FROM THE PRESENT--AND FLEE DESPERATELY INTO THE ARMS OF TIME.
BUT NOW THAT I'M IN THE TIMESTREAM...WHERE CAN I GO? HOW CAN I OUTRUN MY OWN FATE?
WHEN I WAS EDDIE, I TRIED TO CHANGE THINGS...EVEN AFTER I WAS TOLD IT COULDN'T BE DONE.
WHO TOLD ME THAT? WHAT WAS HIS NAME...?
WITHOUT ACCESS TO THE PROPER TECHNIQUES--WHICH I WOULD NEVER TEACH AN AMATEUR--YOU CAN'T CHANGE WHAT'S BEEN ESTABLISHED.
KANG. THAT WAS IT.
KANG THE CONQUEROR.
SO IF I WANT TO FIND HIM AGAIN...
...I'D BETTER FIND A CONQUEST.

SOMEWHERE IN TIME, THERE'S AN INNOCENT PLANET WHERE SENTIENT LIFE HASN'T EVEN FORMED...
...BUT ONE DAY IT WILL.
LIZARDS WILL ONE DAY CRAWL FROM THESE ROCKS. OVER MILLENNIA, THEY'LL GROW OPPOSABLE THUMBS. USE TOOLS. CONQUER THE SKY AND THE STARS.
AND THEN...THEY'LL GET IN KANG'S WAY.
SOMEWHERE IN THE MOUNTAINS, UNDER THE INCREDIBLE BARRAGE OF WEAPONS FROM A BILLION YEARS HENCE--A LAST LIZARD EGG SHATTERS.
A SPECIES DIES BEFORE IT WAS EVER BORN.
PROBLEM SOLVED.
KANG?
I NEED YOUR HELP.
I--I'M TYRO-- I MEAN, EDDIE BROCK. KING IN BLACK, MASTER OF ALL SYMBIOTES... REMEMBER?
HAVE WE MET YET?
NO, EDWARD, WE HAVE NOT.
BUT WHAT A PROMISING FIRST MEETING THIS IS.

YOU'VE CAUGHT ME IN A GOOD MOOD. SO...YES, EDDIE, I WILL HELP YOU. AND THEN YOU CAN HELP ME.
WITH WHAT? I--I DON'T WANT TO--
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T ASK ANYTHING THAT YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO OFFER. I CAN BE A DEADLY ENEMY--BUT I CAN BE A POWERFUL FRIEND, AS WELL.
AND FRANKLY, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A FRIEND. YOU HAVE THE LOOK OF SOMEONE OF GREAT POWER WHO'S BEEN IGNORED AND BELITTLED FOR TOO LONG.
SO IF YOU LET ME, I'LL GIVE YOU TRUE POWER--THE POWER TO COMMAND RESPECT.
AND MORE.
BEHOLD-- THE UNIVERSE IN A HARD-LIGHT HOLOGRAM. EACH DOT OF LIGHT IS A GALAXY, BY THE WAY.
GO AHEAD. FEEL THE QUALITY.
ALL THIS, MY FRIEND.
IF YOU PLAY MY GAME. ON MY BOARD. BY MY RULES...
...ALL THIS CAN BE YOURS.
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

THE FIRST THING KANG TEACHES ME IS HOW TO FIND MY HUMAN FACE AGAIN. MERIDIUS NEVER WOULD HAVE BOTHERED. HE NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED IT.
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I SMILED?
KANG SAYS IT'S A VITAL STEP TO BUILD MY CONFIDENCE...
...AND WITH CONFIDENCE COMES CONTROL.
KANG'S TEACHING ME COMBAT AND STRATEGY. TELLING ME HOW TO CENTER MYSELF. HOW TO FIGHT. HOW TO PLAN. HOW TO THINK.
HE REALLY IS THE BEST FRIEND I EVER HAD.
IN RETURN, AS PROMISED, I HELP HIM. AS KING IN BLACK, I CAN CONDITION AND PROGRAM NEXT-GENERATION WAR SYMBIOTES.
WE DELIVER THEM TO A LATER KANG AT AN EARLIER TIME POINT. HE'LL PASS THEM ON TO HIS PAST SELF AFTER...FIELD-TESTING.
KANG LEADS A COMPLICATED LIFE...
...BUT MINE IS SIMPLER. FOR ALL THEIR COMPLEXITY, MY CRISSCROSSING ROADS THROUGH TIME START OUT FROM ONE PLACE.
A PLACE NAMED DYLAN.

I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT MY SON IN A LONG TIME. IT WAS BETTER THAT WAY--I'M NOTHING BUT A DANGER TO HIM NOW. LAST TIME I TRIED TO INTERFERE IN HIS LIFE, HE ALMOST DIED.
BUT WITH WHAT KANG'S TAUGHT ME, I CAN SEND MY MIND THROUGH TIME WITHOUT POSSESSING SYMBIOTE MATTER AT THE DESTINATION. I CAN CATCH A GLIMPSE OF HIM--AND VENOM.
JUST A PEEK. JUST TO CHECK THAT HE'S SAFE.
SO I SEND MY MIND OUT
AND I SEE...
...THE END OF THE STORY.
VENOM'S ULTIMATE FORM.
VENOMWORLD.
HOW LONG?
HOW LONG DO I JUST STAND HERE? WATCHING IT?
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT WHEN I COME BACK TO MYSELF...
...I'M NOT THE SAME.

IT'S A *VAST* IMPROVEMENT.
I'M THINKING MORE CLEARLY THAN *EVER*--AND, WITH MY NEW MINDSET, I KNOW *EXACTLY* WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO *BREAK* THAT DOOMED FUTURE.
BOTH THE *EARTH'S*... AND *MINE*.
BROCK'S SON. HE'S THE KEY...THE CODEX, IF YOU WILL.
HMM. DID I SAY *BROCK'S* SON?
SO IT GOES. IT'S USELESS PRETENDING I HAVE *ANYTHING* IN COMMON WITH THAT CATERPILLAR OF A MAN...
...*OR* THAT I FEEL ANYTHING FOR HIS *BRAT*.
I HAVE MY *OWN* CHILDREN TO ORDER AROUND. HAVEN'T I TAUGHT THESE SOLDIER BOYS EVERYTHING THEY *KNOW*?
AND JUST LIKE *BROCK*, I'LL THROW THEM ON THE FIRE TO GET WHAT I *WANT*.
NO PROGENY IS SACRED TO ME.

NO *FRIENDSHIP* EITHER.
I *CAN* BE A POWERFUL FRIEND, KANG. BUT... I CAN BE A VERY DEADLY ENEMY, AS WELL.
HOW MANY OF YOUR *CONQUESTS* IN THIS ERA DEPEND ON *SYMBIOTE TECHNOLOGY?*
YOU CAN WEED IT OUT OF YOUR *SYSTEMS...* AND YOU *WILL...*BUT *HERE AND NOW,* ALL YOUR GAINS *DEPEND* ON IT.
AS *KING IN BLACK,* I CAN *NEGATE* THOSE GAINS. TURN YOUR SOLDIERS *AGAINST* YOU--OR TURN THEM *OFF.*
IT'D MAKE A *BIG HOLE* IN YOUR *PLANS...*
...SO YOU'D BETTER ASK WHAT YOU CAN *HELP* ME WITH.
NOTHING YOU WON'T WANT TO *OFFER,* OF COURSE.
VERY NICELY *DONE,* EDWARD. YOU'LL MAKE A CONQUEROR YET.
TELL ME WHAT YOU *NEED.*
SO I DO.

AND HERE WE ARE.
AT THIS POINT, NEAR THE END OF TIME, ALL SYMBIOTES HAVE MIGRATED HERE--TO THE FINAL HIVE.
TO AWAIT THE DEATH OF THIS REALITY AND THE BIRTH OF THE NEXT.
I'LL ASK ONCE MORE--ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT? THEY'RE YOUR SUBJECTS, KING IN BLACK...
THEY'LL BE BETTER SUBJECTS NOW.
AND I'M HONESTLY CURIOUS AS TO WHETHER YOU CAN DO IT...
THE MAGIC WORDS.
NOW KANG'S NOT JUST SETTLING A DEBT...OR PLEASING A MAJOR ALLY IN THE ENDLESS CONQUEST
...HE'S PROVING THAT HIS FORCES--HIS WILL, HIS POWER, HIS IRON HAND--CAN CONQUER ANYTHING THAT WILL EVER EXIST.
THE LAST HIVE HOWLS.

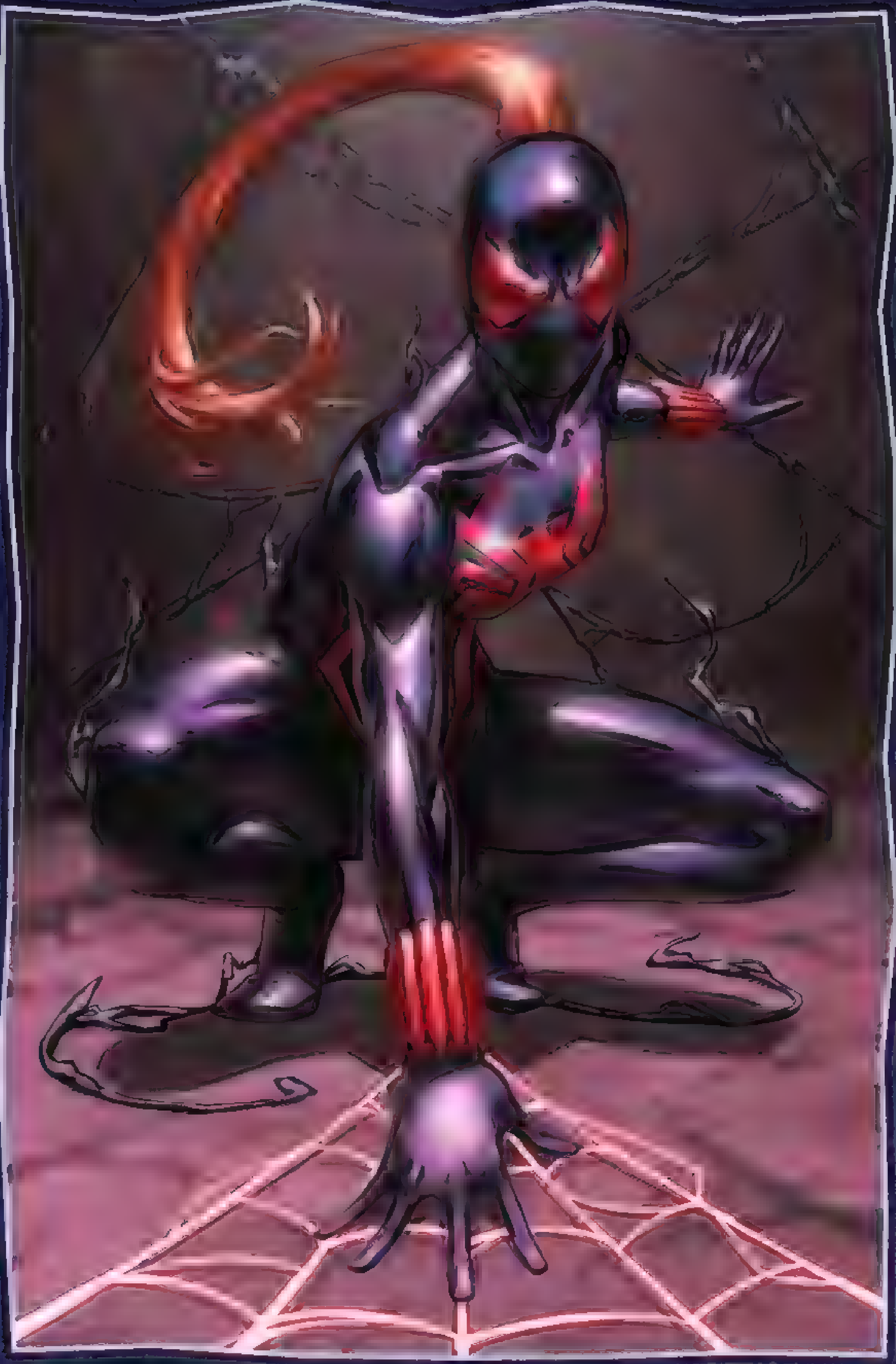
BUT EVEN *TIME'S CONQUEROR* CAN ONLY DO *SO MUCH*.
I'M AFRAID *RAW GOO* IS HARDER TO EXTINGUISH THAN I THOUGHT. *AGGRAVATING*...
READY FOR YOUR TURN AT *BAT?*
WATCH AND LEARN, OLD FRIEND.
THE HIVE *CAN'T BE KILLED*--AT LEAST, NOT FROM THE *OUTSIDE*.
BUT KANG'S ATTACK LEFT IT *SHAKEN*--AND *VULNERABLE*.
ENOUGH FOR ME TO LET MY *MIND* OUT--DIVE *DEEP*, PIERCE THE HIVE'S SKIN LIKE A *POISON ARROW*--
--*AND MURDER EVERY SOUL WITHIN*.

SUCH PEACE. INSIDE. SUCH POETRY.
THE SYMBIOTES SPENT MILLENNIA EVOLVING INTO AN UTTERLY HARMONIZED COMMUNITY--A BEAUTIFUL CHOIR, EXISTING IN PERFECT SYMBIOSIS WITH ITSELF--
--SERENADING THE COSMOS TO ITS END.
BORING.
YOU'VE DISPLEASED YOUR KING, SYMBIOTES.
I'M SICK OF YOUR SONG--
--SO LET ME HEAR YOUR SCREAM!
I SPENT DECADES--CENTURIES--WORKING WITH KANG TO MASTER MY KING IN BLACK POWER. I AM TRULY A GOD NOW--AND MY CONGREGATION IS MINE TO DESTROY.
I ONLY NEED THEIR SUBSTANCE FOR MY PLANS--NOT THEIR SENTIENCE.
I WON'T LIE--IT FEELS GOOD. WHEN DID I EVER FEEL THIS MUCH CONTROL OVER MY LIFE?
WHEN DID I EVER FEEL THIS JOY?
AND NOW--IN DEAD SYMBIOTE FLESH--I CAN BUILD.
BUILD A TRAP. BUILD A GARDEN. A NICE, BRIGHT, COLORFUL PARADISE.

AND JUST WHEN I'VE GOT IT HOW I *WANT* IT...MY *GUESTS* ARRIVE.
THE *KINGS IN BLACK*, COMING ONE BY ONE TO THE ONLY HOME I'VE *ALLOWED* THEM.
WILDE DECIDES HE PREFERS THE WINNING SIDE AND RETURNS AS *TYRO*. *BEDLAM* SQUATS IN A BIKER BAR UNTIL HIS RAGE TURNS *BITTER*--AND SHRINKS INTO *WILDE*.
LIMBO MAGIC MAKES *FINNEGAN* INTO *BEDLAM*. *FINNEGAN*...I THINK I TORTURE HIM INTO EXISTENCE *MYSELF*, DON'T I? *THAT'LL* BE FUN.
AND THEN THERE'S *EDDIE*.
EDDIE, WHO *STARTED* THIS.
EDDIE, WHO I HATE *MOST OF ALL*.
HE TRAPPED US ALL--MAROONED US HELPLESSLY IN OUR DESTINIES.
HE *CAGED* US...
...AND ONLY *I* HAVE THE *KEY*.

THE HARD WORK IS ALREADY DONE. IF ANY MORE PREPARATIONS ARE NEEDED, I CAN GO BACK IN TIME AND PREPARE THEM.
NOTHING CAN GO WRONG. NOTHING DID.
THIS IS EDDIE. AS YOU GUESSED, WILDE, HE'S A KING AS WELL-- WHO OBVIOUSLY CAME HERE THE SAME WAY YOU DID--
HE MEANS BY UNSHACKLING YOUR MIND FROM THE FLOW OF TIME--
DON'T.
EVER.
SPEAK FOR ME.
MY OWN ANGER SURPRISES ME. I THOUGHT I'D FEEL SOME SYMPATHY TOWARD TYRO-- TOWARD MYSELF.
BUT IT'S NOT MYSELF, IS IT? IT'S A SNIVELING, PATHETIC WRETCH--A SHABBY COAT I HAVE FAR OUTGROWN. IT DISGUSTS ME.
I--I'M SORRY, MERIDIUS. I DIDN'T MEAN TO DISRESPECT YOU.
YOU KNOW I ONLY WANT TO LEARN FROM YOU...
STILL...THERE'S SOMETHING HE WANTED TO TELL ME, ISN'T THERE? SOMETHING HE WILL WANT TO TELL ME.
ABOUT TRACKS...ABOUT BROCK...
NO. IT'S GONE.
NEVER MIND. IT CAN'T HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT.
I'M THE KING IN BLACK, AFTER ALL. THE VERY PATTERN OF DESTINY ITSELF SERVES ME...

...AND WHO AM I TO SAY IT'S WRONG?



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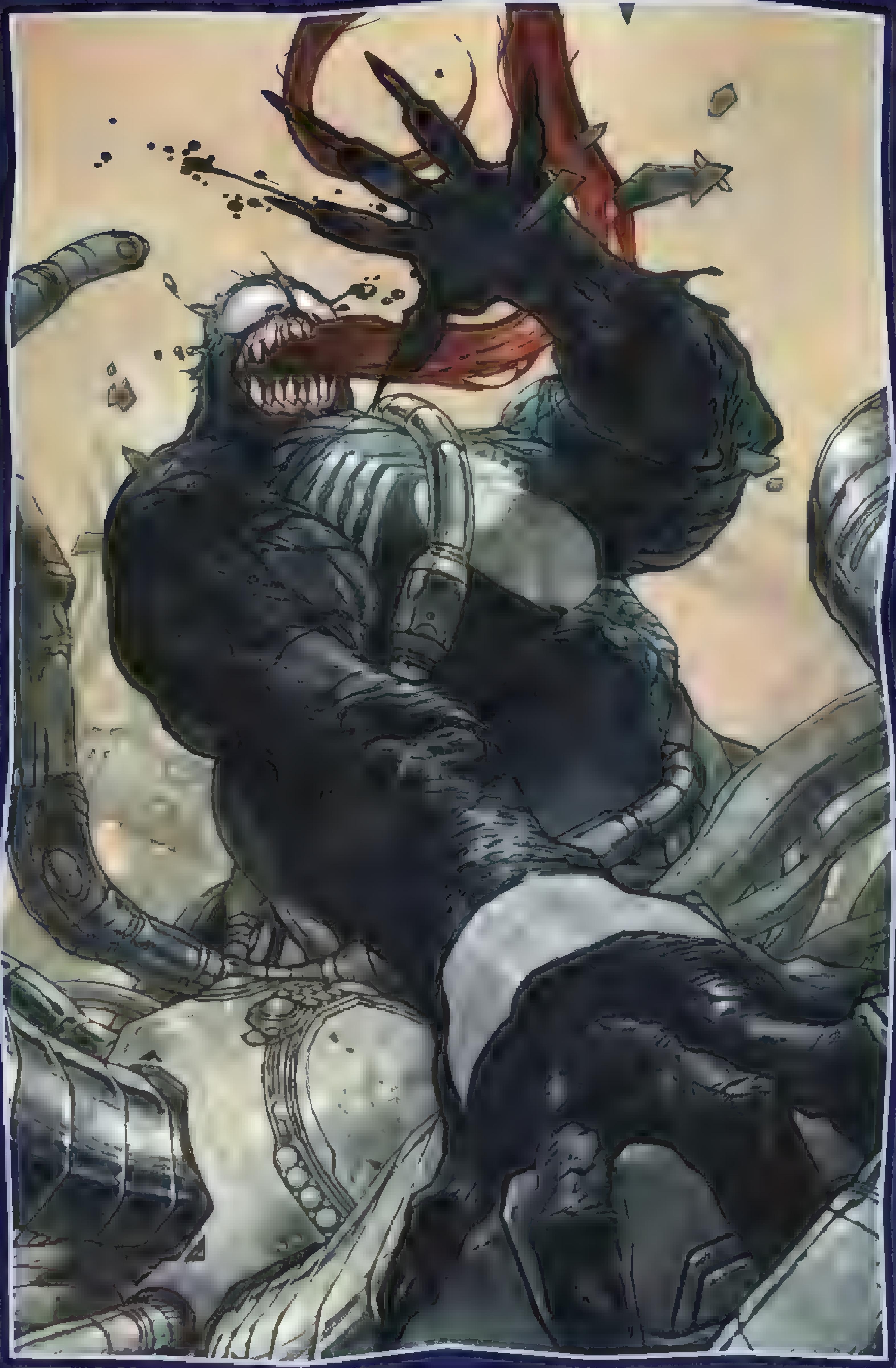

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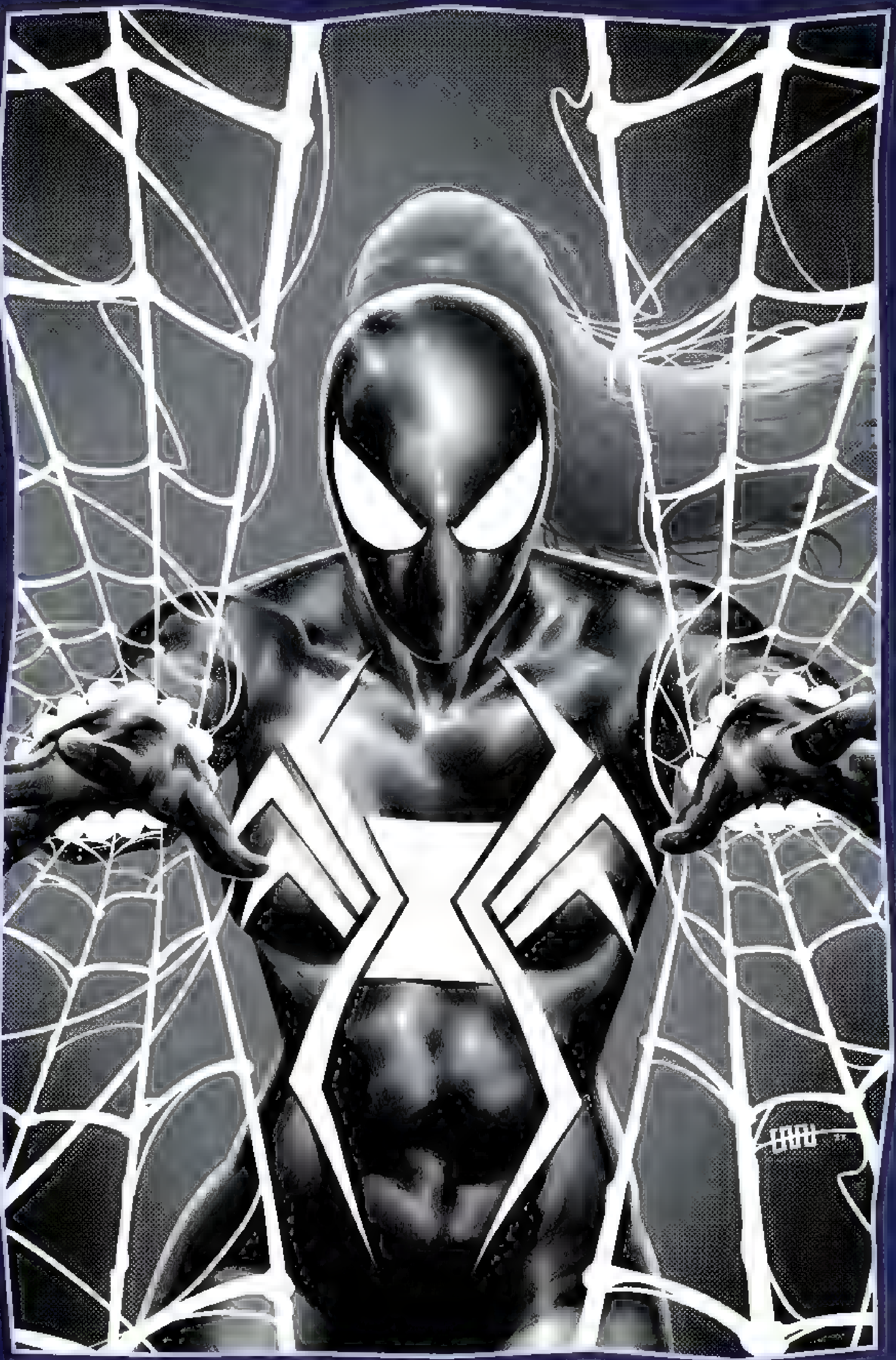

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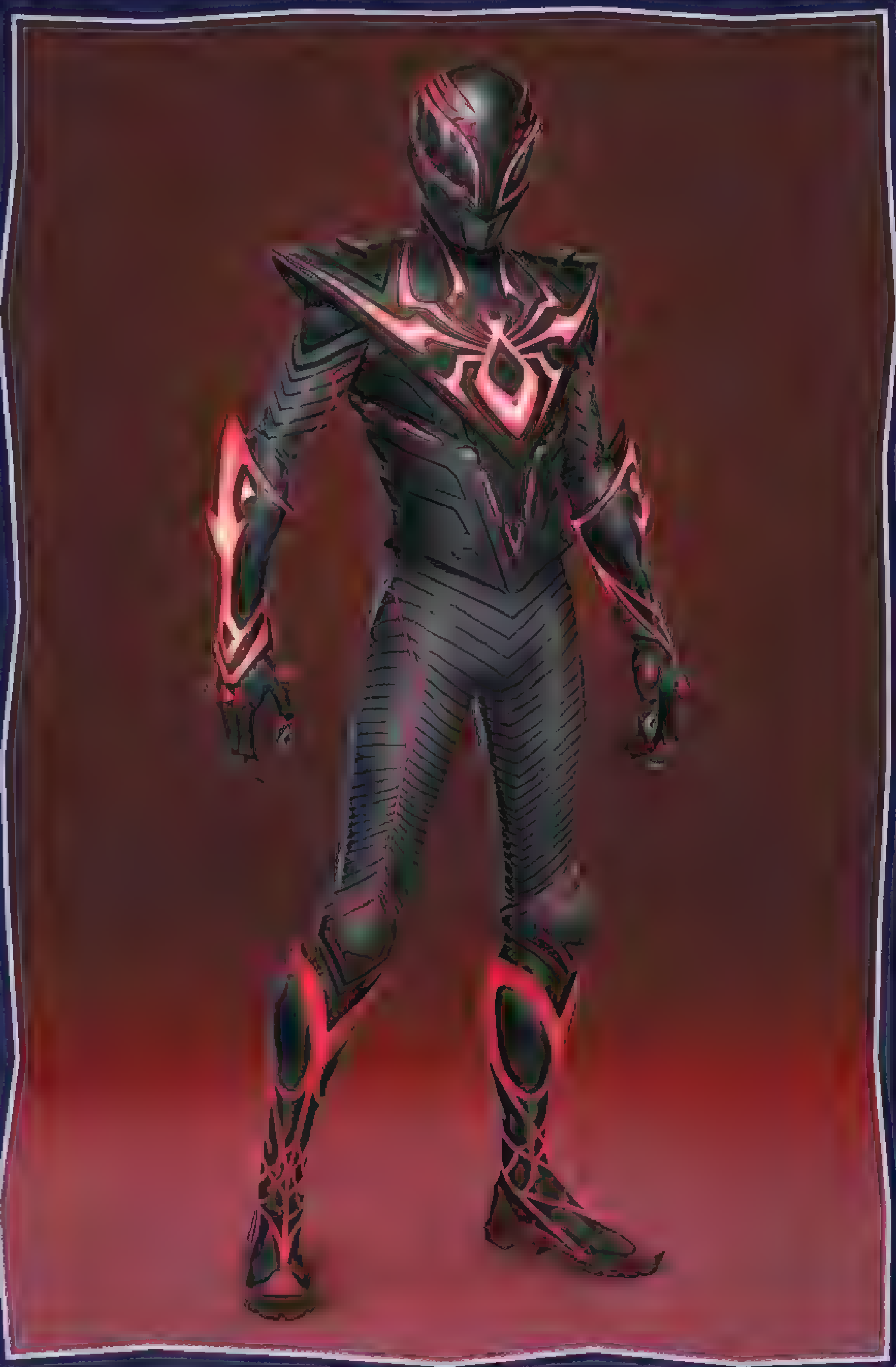


#28 *Marvel's Spider-Man 2* Tokusatsu Suit variant by
JULIA BLATTMAN

"THE ROYAL RUMBLE"

THAT-- HRRK--THAT FACE ISN'T FOOLING ANYBODY!
I'M THE KING IN BLACK!
I'M EDDIE BROCK!

WE ALL ARE, DUMMY--JUST DIFFERENT VERSIONS. DIFFERENT TIMELINES, BRANCHING OFF FROM THE ORIGINAL.
FOR INSTANCE--
--I'M THE EDDIE BROCK WHO JUST TORE YOUR FOOL HEAD OFF.
R-R-RIPP
BUT... BUT I'M THE--
KING IN BLACK, I KNOW. WE'RE ALL THAT TOO.
ONLY MY SYMBIOTE--BEDLAM--HE'S ANOTHER EDDIE. SO IT'S TWO AGAINST ONE.
WE CAN KEEP YOU LOCKED DOWN IN THAT GOO.
LIKE MERIDIUS DID WHEN HE MADE ME WATCH MY SON GET STABBED IN THE HEART, BECAUSE I...YOU...SCREWED UP.
WHAT? DYLAN GOT STABBED--?
YEP. BUT I GUESS THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN FOR YOU YET.
AND NOW IT WON'T.
THANK ME LATER.

THANK YOU?
MORE LIKE $%@& YOU!
YOU'RE NOT BEDLAM! I'M BEDLAM!
EDDIE! DON'T JUST LIE THERE!
GET UP! TELL HIM!
UNNHH...
TELL HIM I'M BEDLAM!
GAAH--
I'M BEDLAM!
NO, I'M BEDLAM!
I'M MORE BEDLAM!
I'M BEDLAM TIMES A BILLION!
NO TAKEBACKS!

LOOK AT THIS. IS THAT FLESH AND BLOOD HE'S WEARING?
I GOT NOTHIN', TYRO.
AGREED, WILDE. IT'S MADNESS.
I'VE LIVED THROUGH THIS MOMENT FOUR TIMES NOW...AS BROCK, AS FINNEGAN, AS BEDLAM, AS YOU...ALWAYS THE SAME MOMENT.
FINNEGAN TURNS UP, BEDLAM AND BROCK FIGHT, WE WATCH...
ALWAYS THE SAME. THAT'S THE CAGE. THAT'S THE POINT.
THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED...
YOU'RE NOT SUDDENLY REMEMBERING THIS FROM BACK WHEN YOU WERE ME...?
THIS. NEVER. HAPPENED. TO ANY OF US.
AND IF IT'S THE FIRST TIME FOR US ALL, THEN...
...
THEN I DON'T BECOME YOU. I DON'T HAVE TO.
THERE NEVER WAS A CAGE! WE'RE FREE, TYRO! WE'RE ALL--
FREE?
AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE DONE? EVERYTHING THAT WAS DONE TO US?
YOU WANT ALL OF THAT TO BE FOR NOTHING?
I'M MEANT TO BECOME MERIDIUS! IT'S MY DESTINY TO RULE THIS GARDEN! I DON'T WANT TO BE FREE!
IT CAN'T BE FOR NOTHING!

IT WON'T BE FOR NOTHING, BROCK!
WHAT...?
YOU THINK THIS IS A JOKE TO US? A SICK JOKE?
HEY-- STOP--
I SPENT YEARS FIGHTING FATE--AND NOTHING CHANGED! NOTHING!
BUT RIGHT WHEN I ACCEPTED IT--RIGHT WHEN I WANTED TO BE MERIDIUS, RIGHT WHEN I WANTED THE CAGE--
--YOU CAME!
TO TAKE IT AWAY!
AARRHH!
TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE, BROCK.
AND IF YOU'RE IN A HUMAN BODY NOW, THAT'S FINE. I'LL JUST TAKE IT APART PIECE BY--
TYRO.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR ME.
GAAAHH! FINNEGAN!
GET OFF ME, YOU SNIVELING FREAK--
SNIVELING--? I'M YOU! YOU'RE ME!
I WAS PRAYING FOR THIS! FOR A CHANCE TO BREAK THE LOOP!
TO PREVENT-- PREVENT DYLAN'S DEATH--
--AND YOU TURN THAT DOWN? WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
PREVENT WHAT...?
IDIOT!
DYLAN'S NOT DEAD, YOU MORON! HE'S STRONGER NOW!
AAAHHH--
HE'S GOT HIS OWN HIVE! HIS OWN ARMY! AND WHEN HE'S READY--HE'LL BE MERIDIUS' TOOL TO ESCAPE!
EXCEPT THAT'S NOT HIS JOB.
WHAT...?

HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN SOME SYMBIOTE WARRIOR WITH HIS OWN HIVE. WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE PUT HIM IN THAT POSITION.
HE'S NOT A TOOL--HE'S A KID. HE'S OUR SON.
IT'S NOT HIS JOB TO HELP US--IT'S OUR JOB TO HELP HIM.
AND IF YOU'RE TOO FAR GONE TO SEE THAT--
--YOU NEED TO SIT THIS ONE OUT!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, WILDE? YOU GOT ANY SMART REMARKS?
WOW
NOPE. NOT ME, ME.
I'M JUST WATCHING THE SHOW.
CHECK IT OUT.

WELL, THAT'S DISTURBING.
GUESS THEY'RE GOING MIND VERSUS MIND.
"NOT SURE I WANT TO KNOW WHAT THAT LOOKS LIKE..."
I'LL KILL YOU--
YOU'LL KILL ME? I'LL KILL YOU!
I'LL KILL ALL OF YOU!
I'LL KILL YOU FIRST--
QUESTION.
YOU SAID YOUR TEAM-UP WITH BEDLAM II: LEGEND OF CURLY'S GOLD OVER THERE COULD KEEP US FROM RE-FORMING.
BUT RIGHT NOW...HE'S LOOKING OTHERWISE ENGAGED. SO ARE YOU STILL SUPER-KING OR WHAT?
GAAAH!
BROCK!
WHOOPS. THAT ANSWERS THAT.
RING THE BELL FOR ROUND TWO...

YEAH. FIGURES NOTHING'S EVER *EASY.*
ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO, LET'S TRY THIS *AGAIN--*
--NNNNH!
WHAT THE--?
IT'S LIKE AN *EARTHQUAKE!* THE WHOLE *GARDEN'S* FLEXING!
MAYBE THE *DORMANT SYMBIOTE MINDS* THAT *MAKE UP* THIS PLACE ARE *WAKING UP--*
OH MY GOD, I FORGOT HOW *NAIVE* WE WERE.
THEY'RE *ALL DEAD,* NEW KID.
THERE'S ONLY *ONE* MIND THAT EVER MADE UP THIS PLACE...
BRRROOOCK...
...I'M *NOT HAPPY.*
VERY.
NOT HAPPY.

IT'S NOT THAT YOU TRIED TO *KILL ME.*
I CAN *RESPECT* THAT.
IT'S NOT THAT YOU'VE EVIDENTLY *BROKEN FREE* OF THE CAGE OF EVENTS.
I'M *ENVIOUS*-- BUT IT SHOWS IT CAN BE DONE. I *CAN* FREE MYSELF FROM *THE EVENTUALITY,* AND I *WILL.*
THAT'S NOT WHY I'M MAD, EDDIE.
I'M MAD BECAUSE YOU'RE SO *STUPID!* BECAUSE YOU *STILL DON'T KNOW* WHAT THE GARDEN *IS,* DO YOU?
YOU THINK IT'S *DEAD SYMBIOTE MATTER* THAT I *SHAPED LIKE CLAY?*
THERE'S NO SUCH *THING* AS DEAD SYMBIOTE MATTER.
ALL SYMBIOTE IS *ALIVE,* EDDIE--JUST *UNCLAIMED* BY A *MIND.*
I DIDN'T *SCULPT* IT-- I *TOOK* IT. *I AM THE GARDEN,* BROCK.
THIS IS MY BODY, THIS IS MY BLOOD...
...AND WHAT I *GIVETH...*
HNNH!
MERIDIUS, *PLEASE*-- I'VE BEEN SO *LOYAL*--

...I CAN *TAKETH* AWAY.
ARRGHH!
NO!
NO!
YOU'RE *ALONE,* BROCK. AND FOR ALL YOUR *TRICKS,* YOU'RE ONLY *HUMAN.*
TWIST, TURN, *RESURRECT* ALL YOU LIKE--*CARBON-BASED* CELLS WILL ALWAYS *LOSE* TO *SYMBIOTE.*
MAYBE THE FLESH *IS* WEAK. BUT YOU'RE NOT THE *ONLY* ONE WHO CAN MAKE SYMBIOTES *DANCE.*
WE'RE *BOTH* THE KING IN BLACK--
HA!
YOU THINK ANY GOO IN THIS GARDEN WILL LISTEN TO *YOU* OVER *ME?* I'VE GOT THE *POWER,* EDDIE-- AND CENTURIES OF *EXPERIENCE.*
THERE ISN'T *ONE MIND* IN *ALL OF TIME AND SPACE* THAT CAN SUBVERT MY--
UHRK.

UNNH. HFF.
NO.
MERIDIUS?
IS THAT-- BLOOD...?
H-HKK.
CHEST-- CHEST HURTS--
YOU'RE KIDDING.
HOW DOES A THIRTY-FOOT-TALL MEGA-SYMBIOTE WITH HOLLYWOOD TEETH HAVE A HEART ATTACK...?
I DON'T THINK THAT'S WHAT THIS IS.
THAT'S NOT BLOOD.
IT'S JUST RED.
RED.
EVERYTHING'S RED--

--RED AS CARNAGE!

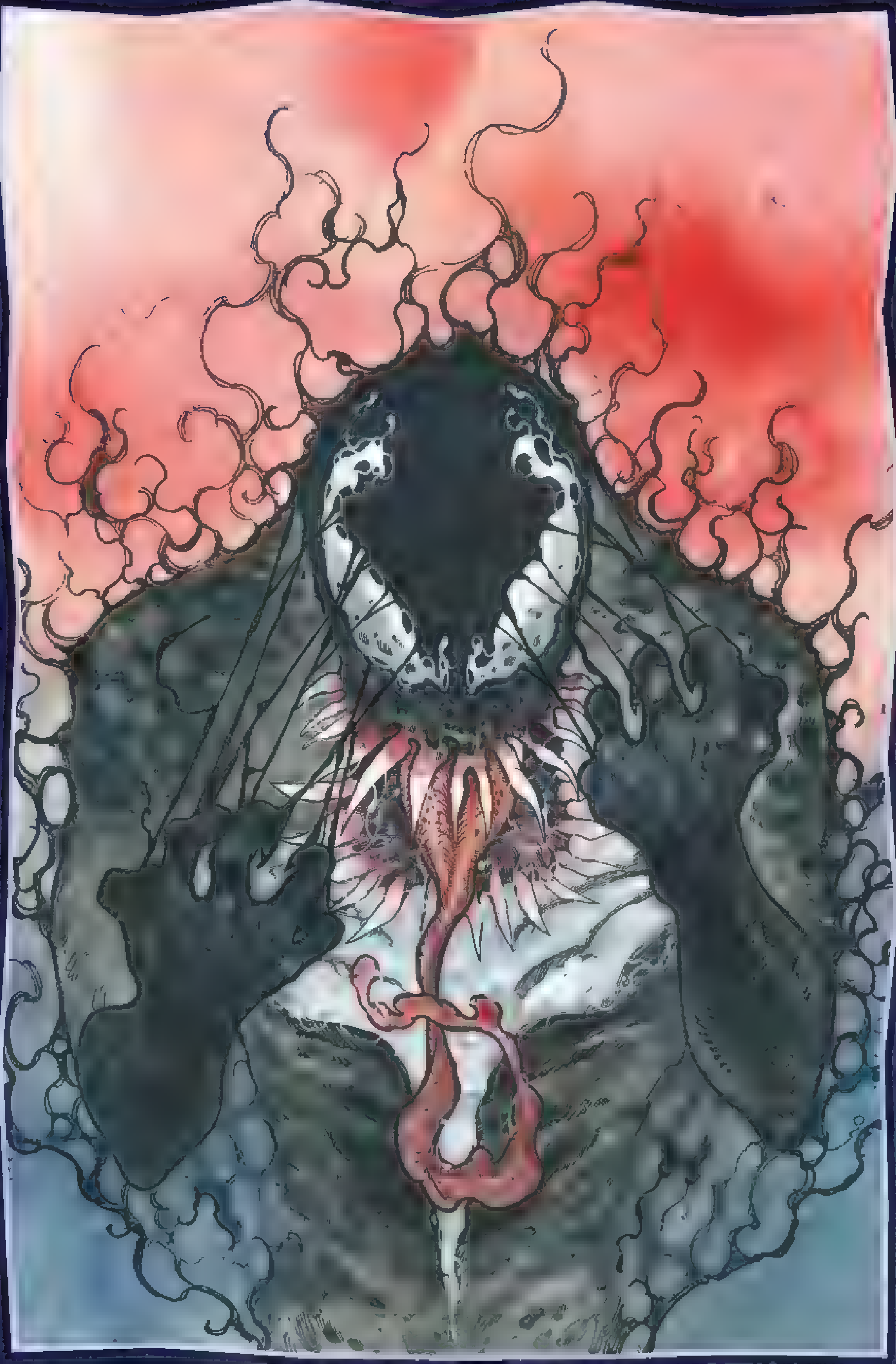
...HEH.
YOUR FACES.
YOU KNOW, I COULD HAVE SWORN I SAW A GIANT HAND. BURNING CANDLES FOR FINGERS. A GREAT BURNING ENGINE.
NOW, THERE'S A GOD, I THOUGHT!
SO I DOVE INTO THE BLACK WATER AND WENT FOR A SWIM-- BUT INSTEAD OF THERE, I AM HERE.
IN YOUR HEAVEN, EDDIE.
HEAVEN! I'M IN HEAVEN!
AHEHEHEH!
CARNAGE.
NOW IT ALL MAKES SENSE...
IT DOES?

YOU'RE WHAT GOT INTO RINGO.
YOU KILLED EVERYONE ON THAT FREIGHTER...
WHAT?
WHAT FREIGHTER-- WAIT, WAS THIS IN SPACE?
HE...NNH... MEANS THE DEAD CAT ALIENS WAY BACK WHEN. HE THINKS THAT WAS...WAS KASADY...
OH! RIGHT, THE CAT ALIENS.
THAT WAS SO LONG AGO...*
WAY BACK IN VENOM #1!
MER-ID-EE-US. THAT'S THE BIG ONE'S NAME, IS IT?
BIG EDDIES AND SMALLER EDDIES AND LITTLE STRING-CHEESE EDDIES. IT'S LIKE A SMORGASBORD.
WHY'D I END UP IN HIM, I WONDER? SOME PAST CONNECTION?
DO WE LINK UP IN THE FUTURE? BOTH AT ONCE? THESE ARE THE QUESTIONS I HAVE TO ASK MYSELF NOW.
NOW THAT I'M A GOD.
DID I MENTION THAT I'M GOD, EDDIE?
IF YOU'RE GOD...
...CALL ME NITCH.

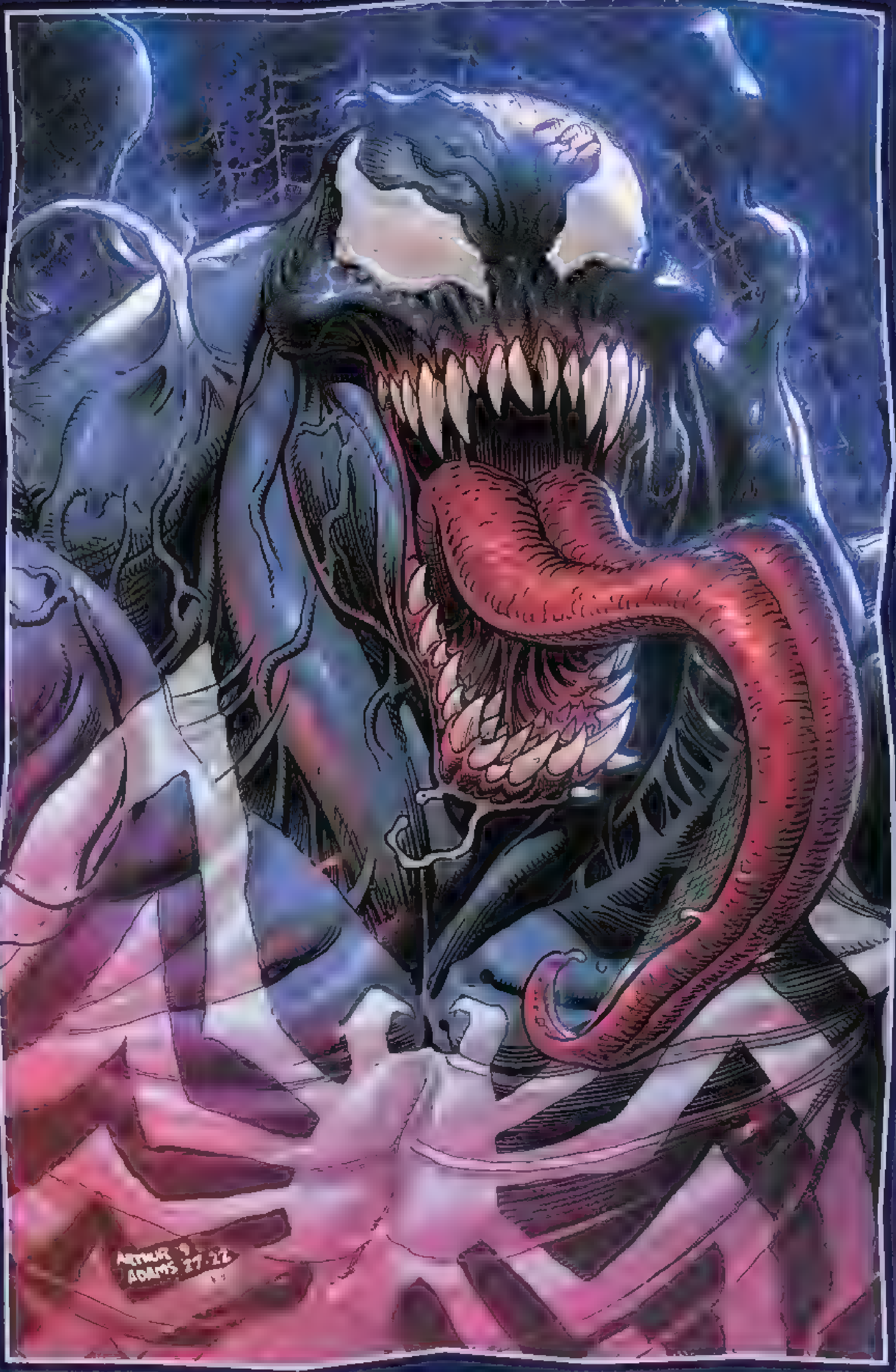
FOR ONE, IT'S PRONOUNCED "NIETZSCHE."
FOR TWO...REALLY, EDDIE? YOU PICKED THOSE FOR YOUR LAST WORDS? THAT...WELL, I CAN'T EVEN CALL IT A QUIP...
DEAR GOD, EDDIE. DEAR ME.
HRRRKK!
YOU WERE MY FINAL BOSS. THE MONSTER AT THE END OF MY BOOK. THE ONE KILL IT WAS ALL LEADING UP TO.
BUT I'M JUST SO DISAPPOINTED IN YOU.
H...HOW...?
FWOOSHHH
I DON'T EVEN HAVE THE HEART TO MAKE THIS LAST.

HE...HE'S REALLY... I CAN FEEL IT...
HE'S REALLY DEAD...
WHAT PART OF GOD DON'T YOU GET?
BUT AFTER KILLING WHOLE VENOMVERSES...YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S AN ANTICLIMAX.
I THOUGHT I'D FEEL SO MUCH MORE.
WHEN I SLAUGHTERED THE BRAT? AFTER I BROKE HIS HEART?
THAT...THAT WAS SUNRISE ON A SPRING MORNING. A SWEET SONATA ON AN ANGEL'S HARP.
WHO KNOWS?
MAYBE I'VE SPENT ALL THESE YEARS ON THE WRONG BROCK.
...
WHAT DID YOU SAY?

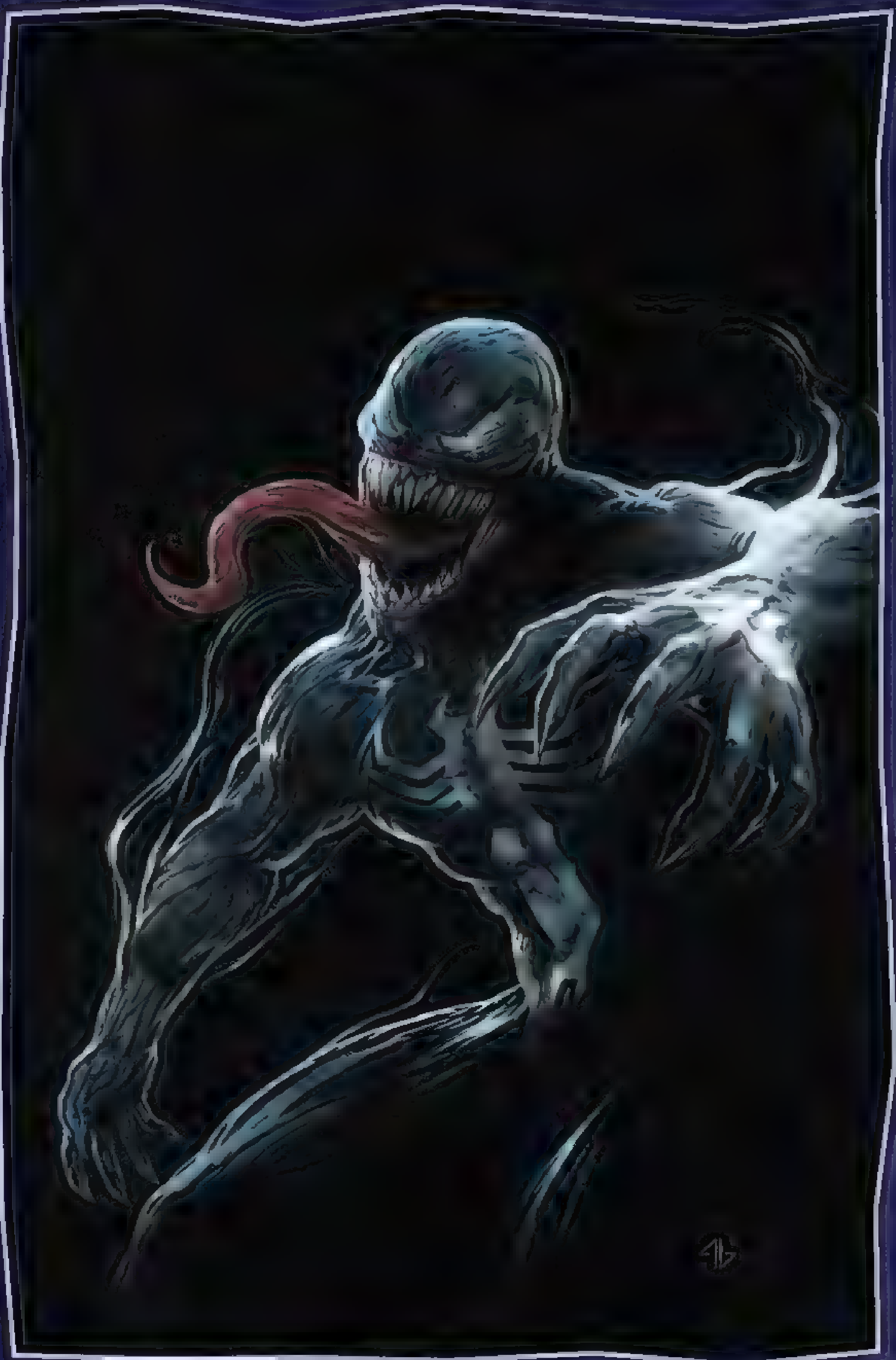
I SAID I MURDERED YOUR BOY, OLD MAN.
DYLAN'S DEAD...
...AND YOU'RE NEXT.
TO BE CONTINUED...



#28 Nightmare variant by
PEACH MOMOKO



#28 variant by
ARTHUR ADAMS & ALEJANDRO SÁNCHEZ



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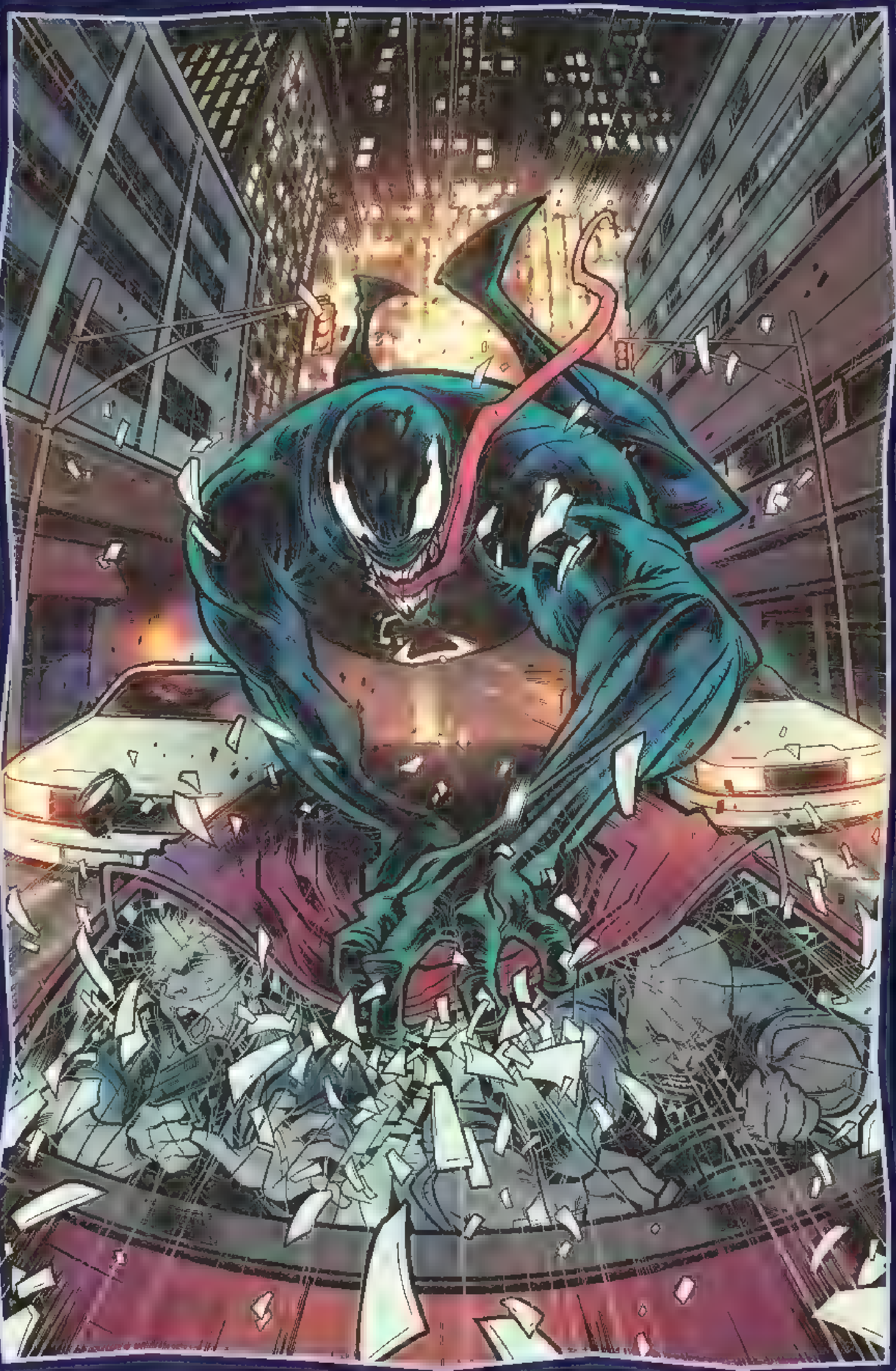

#28 variant by
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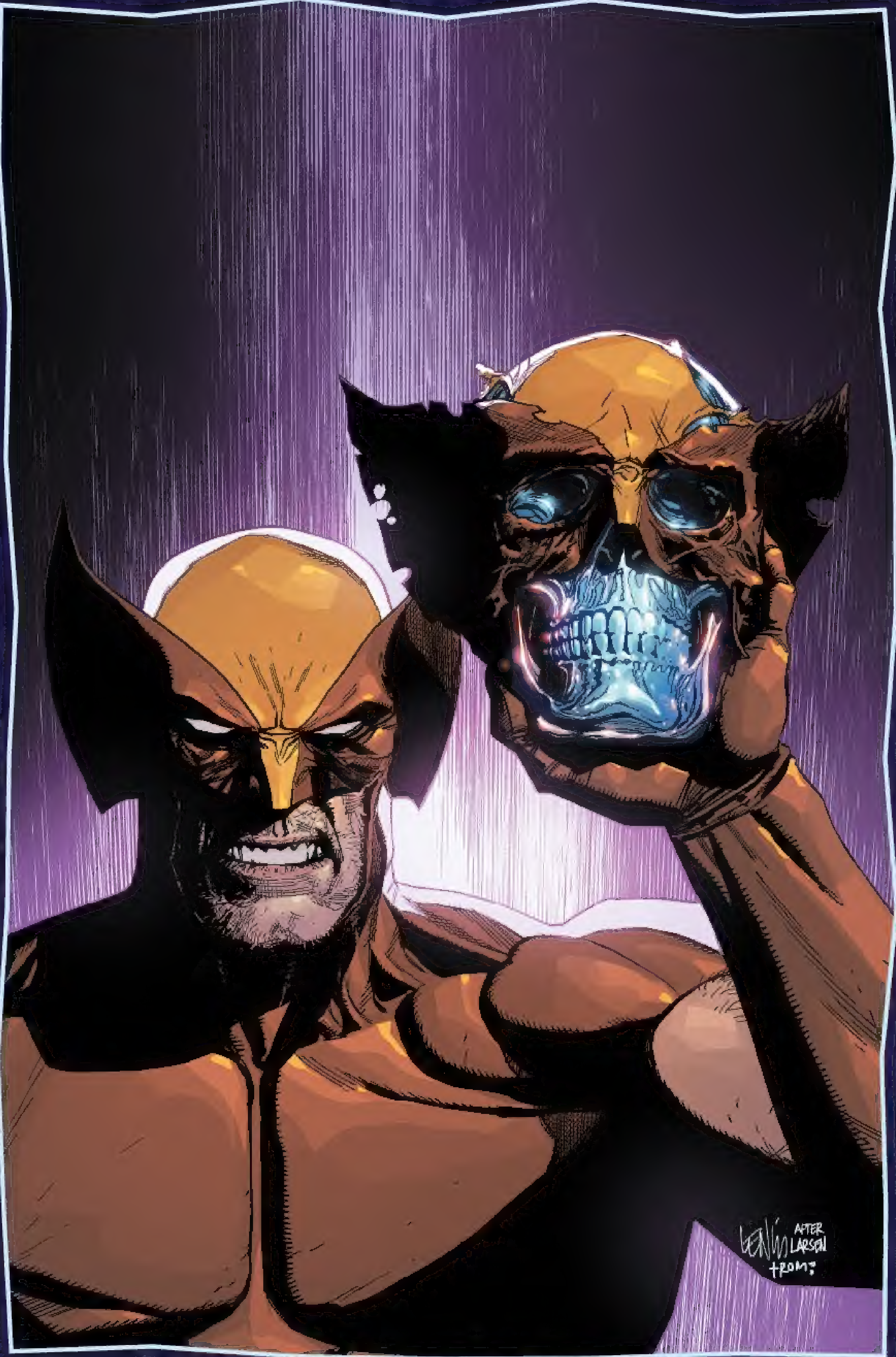

#29 Wolverine Wolverine Wolverine variant by
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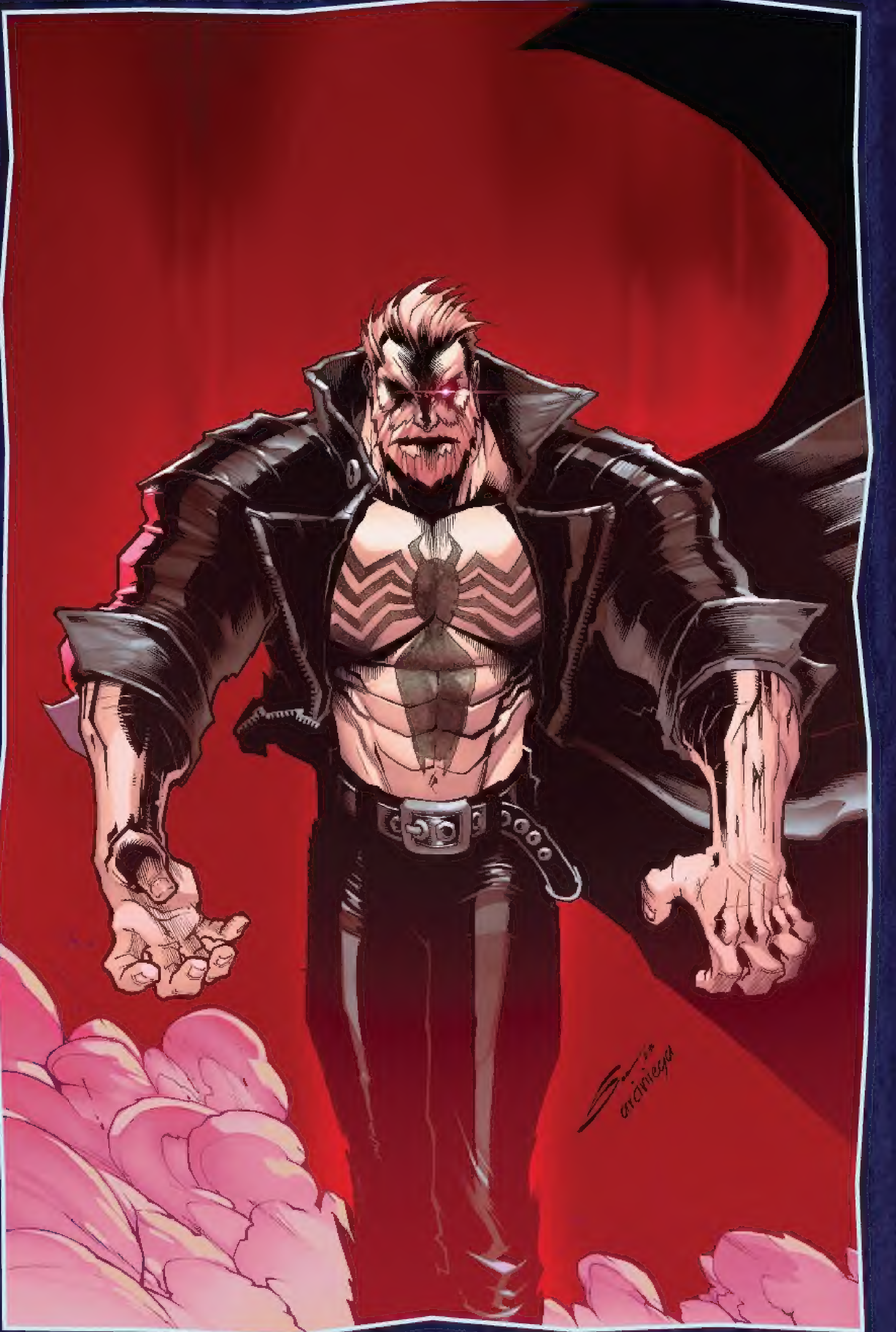
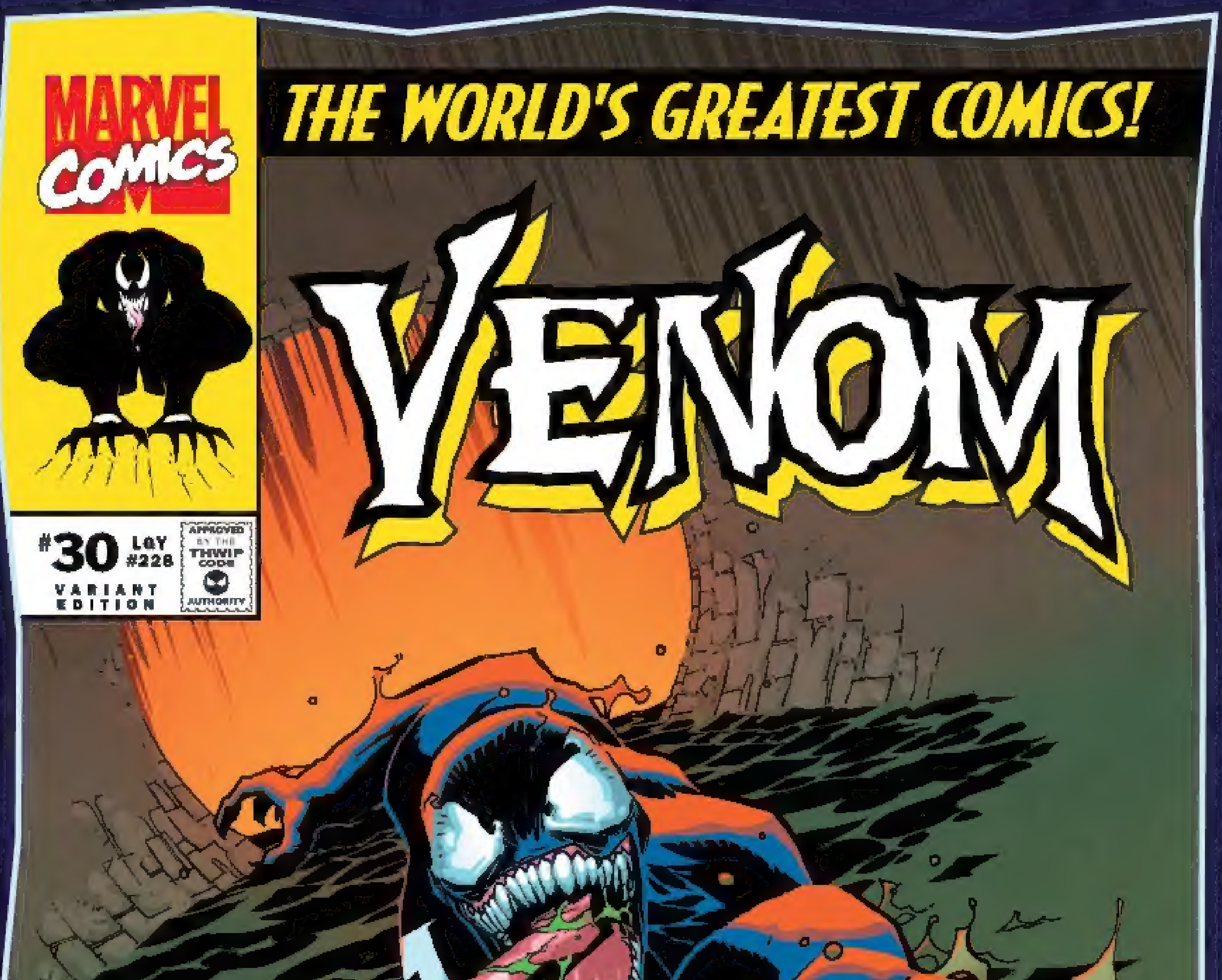


#30 variant by
GERARDO SANDOVAL & DAVID CURIEL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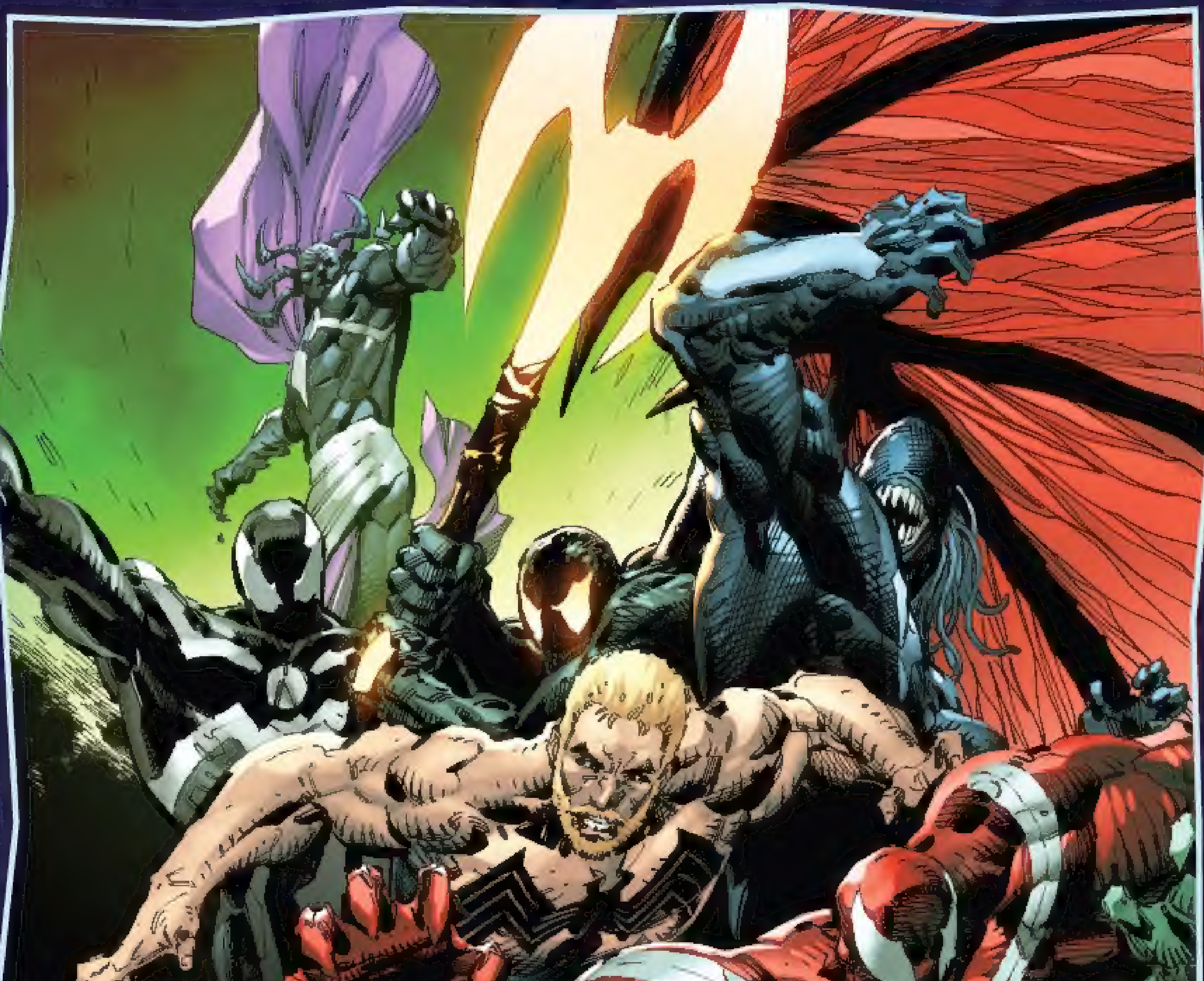

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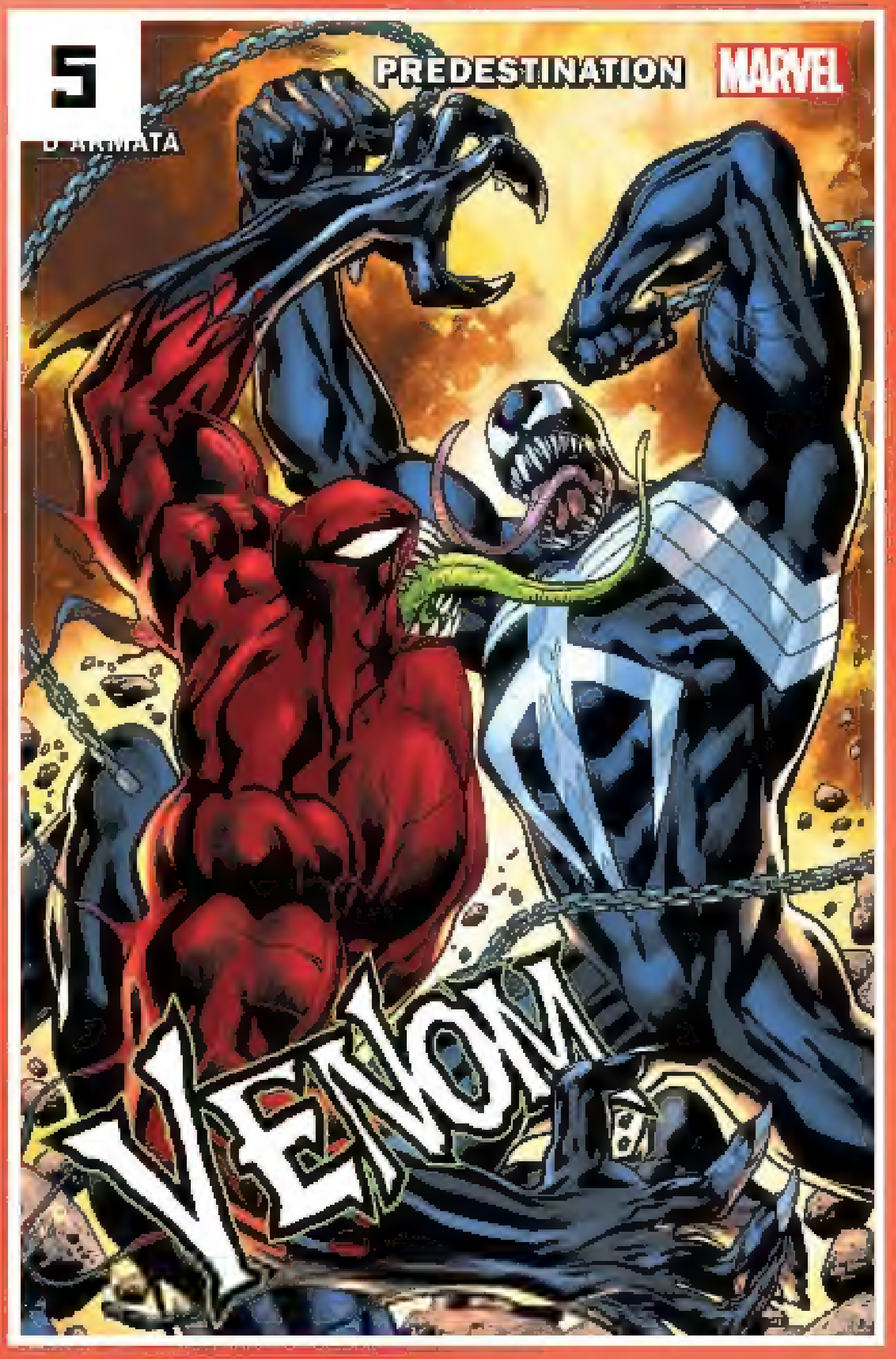
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